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PETRARCH.

THE SONNETS, TRIUMPHS,

AND OTHER POEMS

OF

PETRARCH.

NOW FIRST COMPLETELY TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE

BY VARIOUS HANDS.

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ccc.

WITH A LIFE OF THE POET

BY THOMAS CAMPBELL.

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PREFACE.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

THE present translation of Petrarch completes the Illustrated Library series of the Italian Poets emphatically distinguished as "I Quattro Poeti Italiani."

It is rather a singular fact that, while the other three Poets of this world-famed series — Dante, Ariosto, and Tasso—have each found several translators, no complete version of the fourth, and in Italy the most popular, has hitherto been presented to the English reader. This lacune becomes the more remarkable when we consider the great influence which Petrarch has undoubtedly exercised on our poetry from the time of Chaucer downwards.

The plan of the present volume has been to select from all the known versions those most distinguished for fidelity and rhythm. Of the more favourite poems, as many as three or four are occasionally given; while of others, and those by no means few, it has been difficult to find even one. Indeed, many must have remained entirely unrepresented but for the spirited efforts of Major Macgregor, who has recently translated nearly the whole, and that with great closeness both as to matter and form. To this gentleman we have to return our especial thanks for his liberal permission to make free use of his labours.

Among the translators will be found Chaucer, Spenser, Sir Thomas Wyatt, Anna Hume, Sir John Harington,

Basil Kennett, Anne Bannerman, Drummond of Hawthornden, R. Molesworth, Hugh Boyd, Lord Woodhouselee, the Rev. Francis Wrangham, the Rev. Dr. Nott, Dr. Morehead, Lady Dacre, Lord Charlemont, Capel Lofft, John Penn, Charlotte Smith, Mrs. Wrottesley, Miss Wollaston, J. H. Merivale, the Rev. W. Shepherd, and Leigh Hunt, besides many anonymous.

The order of arrangement is that adopted by Marsand and other recent editors; but to prevent any difficulty in identification, the Italian first lines have been given throughout, and repeated in an alphabetical index.

The Life of Petrarch prefixed is a condensation of the poet Campbell's two octavo volumes, and includes all the material part of that work.

York Street, Covent Garden,
June 28, 1859.

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THE

LIFE OF PETRARCH.

THE family of Petrarch was originally of Florence, where his ancestors held employments of trust and honour. Garzo, his great-grandfather, was a notary universally respected for his integrity and judgment. Though he had never devoted himself exclusively to letters, his literary opinion was consulted by men of learning. He lived to be a hundred and four years old, and died, like Plato, in the same bed in which he had been born.

Garzo left three sons, one of whom was the grandfather of Petrarch. Diminutives being customary to the Tuscan tongue, Pietro, the poet's father, was familiarly called Petracco, or little Peter. He, like his ancestors, was a notary, and not undistinguished for sagacity. He had several important commissions from government. At last, in the increasing conflicts between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines—or, as they now called themselves, the Blacks and the Whites—Petracco, like Dante, was obliged to fly from his native city, along with the other Florentines of the White party. He was unjustly accused of having officially issued a false deed, and was condemned, on the 20th of October, 1302, to pay a fine of one thousand lire, and to have his hand cut off, if that sum was not paid within ten days from the time he should be apprehended. Petracco fled, taking with him his wife, Eletta Canigiani, a lady of a distinguished family in Florence, several of whom had held the office of Gonfalonier.

Petracco and his wife first settled at Arezzo, a very ancient city of Tuscany. Hostilities did not cease between the Florentine factions till some years afterwards; and, in an attempt made by the Whites to take Florence by assault, Petracco was present with his party. They were repulsed. This action, which was fatal to their cause, took place in the night between the 19th and 20th days of July, 1304,—the precise date of the birth of Petrarch.

During our poet's infancy, his family had still to struggle with

an adverse fate; for his proscribed and wandering father was obliged to separate himself from his wife and child, in order to have the means of supporting them.

As the pretext for banishing Petracco was purely personal, Eletta, his wife, was not included in the sentence. She removed to a small property of her husband's, at Ancisa, fourteen miles from Florence, and took the little poet along with her, in the seventh month of his age. In their passage thither, both mother and child, together with their guide, had a narrow escape from being drowned in the Arno. Eletta entrusted her precious charge to a robust peasant, who, for fear of hurting the child, wrapt it in a swaddling cloth, and suspended it over his shoulder, in the same manner as Metabus is described by Virgil, in the eleventh book of the Æneid, to have carried his daughter Camilla. In passing the river, the horse of the guide, who carried Petrarch, stumbled, and sank down; and in their struggles to save him, both his sturdy bearer and the frantic parent were, like the infant itself, on the point of being drowned.

After Eletta had settled at Ancisa, Petracco often visited her by stealth, and the pledges of their affection were two other sons, one of whom died in childhood. The other, called Gherardo, was educated along with Petrarch. Petrarch remained with his mother at Ancisa for seven years.

The arrival of the Emperor, Henry VII., in Italy, revived the hopes of the banished Florentines; and Petracco, in order to wait the event, went to Pisa, whither he brought his wife and Francesco, who was now in his eighth year. Petracco remained with his family in Pisa for several months; but tired at last of fallacious hopes, and not daring to trust himself to the promises of the popular party, who offered to recall him to Florence, he sought an asylum in Avignon, a place to which many Italians were allured by the hopes of honours and gain at the papal residence. In this voyage, Petracco and his family were nearly shipwrecked off Marseilles.

But the numbers that crowded to Avignon, and its luxurious court, rendered that city an uncomfortable place for a family in slender circumstances. Petracco accordingly removed his household, in 1315, to Carpentras, a small quiet town, where living was cheaper than at Avignon. There, under the care of his mother, Petrarch imbibed his first instruction, and was taught by one Convennole da Prato as much grammar and logic as could be learned at his age, and more than could be learned by an ordinary disciple from so common-place a preceptor. This poor master, however, had sufficient intelligence to appreciate the genius of Petrarch, whom he esteemed and honoured beyond all his other pupils. On the other hand, his illustrious scholar aided him, in his old age and poverty, out of his scanty income.

Petrarch used to compare Convennole to a whetstone, which is

blunt itself, but which sharpens others. His old master, however, was sharp enough to overreach him in the matter of borrowing and lending. When the poet had collected a considerable library, Convennole paid him a visit, and, pretending to be engaged in something that required him to consult Cicero, borrowed a copy of one of the works of that orator, which was particularly valuable. He made excuses, from time to time, for not returning it; but Petrarch, at last, had too good reason to suspect that the old grammarian had pawned it. The poet would willingly have paid for redeeming it, but Convennole was so much ashamed, that he would not tell to whom it was pawned; and the precious manuscript was lost.

Petracco contracted an intimacy with Settimo, a Genoese, who was, like himself, an exile for his political principles, and who fixed his abode at Avignon with his wife and his boy, Guido Settimo, who was about the same age with Petrarch. The two youths formed a friendship, which subsisted between them for life.

Petrarch manifested signs of extraordinary sensibility to the charms of nature in his childhood, both when he was at Carpentras and at Avignon. One day, when he was at the latter residence, a party was made up, to see the fountain of Vaucluse, a few leagues from Avignon. The little Francesco had no sooner arrived at the lovely landscape than he was struck with its beauties, and exclaimed, "Here, now, is a retirement suited to my taste, and preferable, in my eyes, to the greatest and most splendid cities."

A genius so fine as that of our poet could not servilely confine itself to the slow method of school learning, adapted to the intellects of ordinary boys. Accordingly, while his fellow pupils were still plodding through the first rudiments of Latin, Petrarch had recourse to the original writers, from whom the grammarians drew their authority, and particularly employed himself in perusing the works of Cicero. And, although he was, at this time, much too young to comprehend the full force of the orator's reasoning, he was so struck with the charms of his style, that he considered him the only true model in prose composition.

His father, who was himself something of a scholar, was pleased and astonished at this early proof of his good taste; he applauded his classical studies, and encouraged him to persevere in them; but, very soon, he imagined that he had cause to repent of his commendations. Classical learning was, in that age, regarded as a mere solitary accomplishment, and the law was the only road that led to honours and preferment. Petracco was, therefore, desirous to turn into that channel the brilliant qualities of his son; and for this purpose he sent him, at the age of fifteen, to the university of Montpelier. Petrarch remained there for four years, and attended lectures on law from some of

the most famous professors of the science. But his prepossession for Cicero prevented him from much frequenting the dry and dusty walks of jurisprudence. In his epistle to posterity, he endeavours to justify this repugnance by other motives. He represents the abuses, the chicanery, and mercenary practices of the law, as inconsistent with every principle of candour and honesty.

When Petracco observed that his son made no great progress in his legal studies at Montpelier, he removed him, in 1323, to Bologna, celebrated for the study of the canon and civil law, probably imagining that the superior fame of the latter place might attract him to love the law. To Bologna Petrarch was accompanied by his brother Gherardo, and by his inseparable friend, young Guido Settimo.

But neither the abilities of the several professors in that celebrated academy, nor the strongest exhortations of his father, were sufficient to conquer the deeply-rooted aversion which our poet had conceived for the law. Accordingly, Petracco hastened to Bologna, that he might endeavour to check his son's indulgence in literature, which disconcerted his favourite designs. Petrarch, guessing at the motive of his arrival, hid the copies of Cicero, Virgil, and some other authors, which composed his small library, and to purchase which he had deprived himself of almost the necessaries of life. His father, however, soon discovered the place of their concealment, and threw them into the fire. Petrarch exhibited as much agony as if he had been himself the martyr of his father's resentment. Petracco was so much affected by his son's tears, that he rescued from the flames Cicero and Virgil, and, presenting them to Petrarch, he said, "Virgil will console you for the loss of your other MSS., and Cicero will prepare you for the study of the law."

It is by no means wonderful that a mind like Petrarch's could but ill relish the glosses of the Code and the commentaries on the Decretals.

At Bologna, however, he met with an accomplished literary man and no inelegant poet in one of the professors, who, if he failed in persuading Petrarch to make the law his profession, certainly quickened his relish and ambition for poetry. This man was Cino da Pistoia, who is esteemed by Italians as the most tender and harmonious lyric poet in the native language anterior to Petrarch.

During his residence at Bologna, Petrarch made an excursion as far as Venice, a city that struck him with enthusiastic admiration. In one of his letters he calls it "*orbem alterum.*" Whilst Italy was harassed, he says, on all sides by continual dissensions, like the sea in a storm, Venice alone appeared like a safe harbour, which overlooked the tempest without feeling its commotion. The resolute and independent spirit of that republic made an

indelible impression on Petrarch's heart. The young poet, perhaps, at this time little imagined that Venice was to be the last scene of his triumphant eloquence.

Soon after his return from Venice to Bologna, he received the melancholy intelligence of the death of his mother, in the thirty-eighth year of her age. Her age is known by a copy of verses which Petrarch wrote upon her death, the verses being the same in number as the years of her life. She had lived humble and retired, and had devoted herself to the good of her family; virtuous amidst the prevalence of corrupted manners, and, though a beautiful woman, untainted by the breath of calumny. Petrarch has repaid her maternal affection by preserving her memory from oblivion. Petracco did not long survive the death of this excellent woman. According to the judgment of our poet, his father was a man of strong character and understanding. Banished from his native country, and engaged in providing for his family, he was prevented by the scantiness of his fortune, and the cares of his situation, from rising to that eminence which he might have otherwise attained. But his admiration of Cicero, in an age when that author was universally neglected, was a proof of his superior mind.

Petrarch quitted Bologna upon the death of his father, and returned to Avignon, with his brother Gherardo, to collect the shattered remains of their father's property. Upon their arrival, they found their domestic affairs in a state of great disorder, as the executors of Petracco's will had betrayed the trust reposed in them, and had seized most of the effects of which they could dispose. Under these circumstances, Petrarch was most anxious for a MS. of Cicero, which his father had highly prized. "The guardians," he writes, "eager to appropriate what they esteemed the more valuable effects, had fortunately left this MS. as a thing of no value." Thus he owed to their ignorance this treatise, which he considered the richest portion of the inheritance left him by his father.

But, that inheritance being small, and not sufficient for the maintenance of the two brothers, they were obliged to think of some profession for their subsistence; they therefore entered the church; and Avignon was the place, of all others, where preferment was most easily obtained. John XXII. had fixed his residence entirely in that city since October, 1316, and had appropriated to himself the nomination to all the vacant benefices. The pretence for this appropriation was to prevent simony—in others, not in his Holiness—as the sale of benefices was carried by him to an enormous height. At every promotion to a bishopric, he removed other bishops; and, by the meanest impositions, soon amassed prodigious wealth. Scandalous emoluments, also, which arose from the sale of indulgences, were enlarged, if not invented, under his papacy, and every method of acquiring riches

was justified which could contribute to feed his avarice. By these sordid means, he collected such sums, that, according to Villani, he left behind him, *in the sacred treasury*, twenty-five millions of florins, a treasure which Voltaire remarks is hardly credible.

The luxury and corruption which reigned in the Roman court at Avignon are fully displayed in some letters of Petrarch's, without either date or address. The partizans of that court, it is true, accuse him of prejudice and exaggeration. He painted, as they allege, the popes and cardinals in the gloomiest colouring. His letters contain the blackest catalogue of crimes that ever disgraced humanity.

Petrarch was twenty-two years of age when he settled at Avignon, a scene of licentiousness and profligacy. The luxury of the cardinals, and the pomp and riches of the papal court, were displayed in an extravagant profusion of feasts and ceremonies, which attracted to Avignon women of all ranks, among whom intrigue and gallantry were generally countenanced. Petrarch was by nature of a warm temperament, with vivid and susceptible passions, and strongly attached to the fair sex. We must not therefore be surprised if, with these dispositions, and in such a dissolute city, he was betrayed into some excesses. But these were the result of his complexion, and not of deliberate profligacy. He alludes to this subject in his Epistle to Posterity, with every appearance of truth and candour.

From his own confession, Petrarch seems to have been somewhat vain of his personal appearance during his youth, a venial foible, from which neither the handsome nor the homely, nor the wise nor the foolish, are exempt. It is amusing to find our own Milton betraying this weakness, in spite of all the surrounding strength of his character. In answering one of his slanderers, who had called him pale and cadaverous, the author of Paradise Lost appeals to all who knew him whether his complexion was not so fresh and blooming as to make him appear ten years younger than he really was.

Petrarch, when young, was so strikingly handsome, that he was frequently pointed at and admired as he passed along, for his features were manly, well-formed, and expressive, and his carriage was graceful and distinguished. He was sprightly in conversation, and his voice was uncommonly musical. His complexion was between brown and fair, and his eyes were bright and animated. His countenance was a faithful index of his heart.

He endeavoured to temper the warmth of his constitution by the regularity of his living and the plainness of his diet. He indulged little in either wine or sleep, and fed chiefly on fruits and vegetables.

In his early days he was nice and neat in his dress, even to a degree of affectation, which, in later life, he ridiculed when writing to his brother Gherardo. "Do you remember," he says,

"how much care we employed in the lure of dressing our persons; when we traversed the streets, with what attention did we not avoid every breath of wind which might discompose our hair; and with what caution did we not prevent the least speck of dirt from soiling our garments!"

This vanity, however, lasted only during his youthful days. And even then neither attention to his personal appearance, nor his attachment to the fair sex, nor his attendance upon the great, could induce Petrarch to neglect his own mental improvement, for, amidst all these occupations, he found leisure for application, and devoted himself to the cultivation of his favourite pursuits of literature.

Inclined by nature to moral philosophy, he was guided by the reading of Cicero and Seneca to that profound knowledge of the human heart, of the duties of others and of our own duties, which shows itself in all his writings. Gifted with a mind full of enthusiasm for poetry, he learned from Virgil elegance and dignity in versification. But he had still higher advantages from the perusal of Livy. The magnanimous actions of Roman heroes so much excited the soul of Petrarch, that he thought the men of his own age light and contemptible.

His first compositions were in Latin: many motives, however, induced him to compose in the vulgar tongue, as Italian was then called, which, though improved by Dante, was still, in many respects, harsh and inelegant, and much in want of new beauties. Petrarch wrote for the living, and for that portion of the living who were least of all to be fascinated by the language of the dead. Latin might be all very well for inscriptions on mausoleums, but it was not suited for the ears of beauty and the bowers of love. The Italian language acquired, under his cultivation, increased elegance and richness, so that the harmony of his style has contributed to its beauty. He did not, however, attach himself solely to Italian, but composed much in Latin, which he reserved for graver, or, as he considered, more important subjects. His compositions in Latin are—Africa, an epic poem; his Bucolics, containing twelve eclogues; and three books of epistles.

Petrarch's greatest obstacles to improvement arose from the scarcity of authors whom he wished to consult—for the manuscripts of the writers of the Augustan age were, at that time, so uncommon, that many could not be procured, and many more of them could not be purchased under the most extravagant price. This scarcity of books had checked the dawning light of literature. The zeal of our poet, however, surmounted all these obstacles, for he was indefatigable in collecting and copying many of the choicest manuscripts; and posterity is indebted to him for the possession of many valuable writings, which were in danger of being lost through the carelessness or ignorance of the possessors.

Petrarch could not but perceive the superiority of his own understanding and the brilliancy of his abilities. The modest humility which knows not its own worth is not wont to show itself in minds much above mediocrity; and to elevated geniuses this virtue is a stranger. Petrarch from his youthful age had an internal assurance that he should prove worthy of estimation and honours. Nevertheless, as he advanced in the field of science, he saw the prospect increase, Alps over Alps, and seemed to be lost amidst the immensity of objects before him. Hence the anticipation of immeasurable labours occasionally damped his application. But from this depression of spirits he was much relieved by the encouragement of John of Florence, one of the secretaries of the Pope, a man of learning and probity. He soon distinguished the extraordinary abilities of Petrarch; he directed him in his studies, and cheered up his ambition. Petrarch returned his affection with unbounded confidence. He entrusted him with all his foibles, his disgusts, and his uneasinesses. He says that he never conversed with him without finding himself more calm and composed, and more animated for study.

The superior sagacity of our poet, together with his pleasing manners, and his increasing reputation for knowledge, ensured to him the most flattering prospects of success. His conversation was courted by men of rank, and his acquaintance was sought by men of learning. It was at this time, 1326, that his merit procured him the friendship and patronage of James Colonna, who belonged to one of the most ancient and illustrious families of Italy.

"About the twenty-second year of my life," Petrarch writes to one of his friends, "I became acquainted with James Colonna. He had seen me whilst I resided at Bologna, and was prepossessed, as he was pleased to say, with my appearance. Upon his arrival at Avignon, he again saw me, when, having inquired minutely into the state of my affairs, he admitted me to his friendship. I cannot sufficiently describe the cheerfulness of his temper, his social disposition, his moderation in prosperity, his constancy in adversity. I speak not from report, but from my own experience. He was endowed with a persuasive and forcible eloquence. His conversation and letters displayed the amiableness of his sincere character. He gained the first place in my affections, which he ever afterwards retained."

Such is the portrait which our poet gives of James Colonna. A faithful and wise friend is among the most precious gifts of fortune; but, as friendships cannot wholly feed our affections, the heart of Petrarch, at this ardent age, was destined to be swayed by still tenderer feelings. He had nearly finished his twenty-third year without having ever seriously known the passion of love. In that year he first saw Laura. Concerning this lady, at one time, when no life of Petrarch had been yet written that was

not crude and inaccurate, his biographers launched into the wildest speculations. One author considered her as an allegorical being; another discovered her to be a type of the Virgin Mary; another thought her an allegory of poetry and repentance. Some denied her even allegorical existence, and deemed her a mere phantom beauty, with which the poet had fallen in love, like Pygmalion with the work of his own creation. All these caprices about Laura's history have been long since dissipated, though the principal facts respecting her were never distinctly verified, till De Sade, her own descendant, wrote his memoirs of the Life of Petrarch.

Petrarch himself relates that in 1327, exactly at the first hour of the 6th of April, he first beheld Laura in the church of St. Clara of Avignon,* where neither the sacredness of the place, nor the solemnity of the day, could prevent him from being smitten for life with human love. In that fatal hour he saw a lady, a little younger than himself,† in a green mantle sprinkled with violets, on which her golden hair fell plaited in tresses. She was distinguished from all others by her proud and delicate carriage. The impression which she made on his heart was sudden, yet it was never effaced.

Laura, descended from a family of ancient and noble extraction, was the daughter of Audibert de Noves, a Provençal nobleman, by his wife Esmessenda. She was born at Avignon, probably in 1308. She had a considerable fortune, and was married in 1325 to Hugh de Sade. The particulars of her life are little known, as Petrarch has left few traces of them in his letters; and it was still less likely that he should enter upon her personal history in his sonnets, which, as they were principally addressed to herself, made it unnecessary for him to inform her of what she already knew.

While many writers have erred in considering Petrarch's attachment as visionary, others, who have allowed the reality of his passion, have been mistaken in their opinion of its object. They allege that Petrarch was a happy lover, and that his mistress was accustomed to meet him at Vaucluse, and make him a full compensation for his fondness. No one at all acquainted with the life and writings of Petrarch will need to be told that this is an absurd fiction. Laura, a married woman, who bore ten children to a rather morose husband, could not have gone to meet him at Vaucluse without the most flagrant scandal. It is evident from his writings that she repudiated his passion whenever it threatened to exceed the limits of virtuous friendship. On one occasion,

* Before the publication of De Sade's "Mémoires pour la vie de Petrarque," the report was that Petrarch first saw Laura at Vaucluse. The truth of their first meeting in the church of St. Clara depends on the authenticity of the famous note on the MS. Virgil of Petrarch, which is now in the Ambrosian Library at Milan.

† Petrarch, in his dialogue with St. Augustin, states that he was older than Laura by a few years.

when he seemed to presume too far upon her favour, she said to him with severity, "I am not what you take me for." If his love had been successful, he would have said less about it.

Of the two persons in this love affair, I am more inclined to pity Laura than Petrarch. Independently of her personal charms, I cannot conceive Laura otherwise than as a kind-hearted, loveable woman, who could not well be supposed to be totally indifferent to the devotion of the most famous and fascinating man of his age. On the other hand, what was the penalty that she would have paid if she had encouraged his addresses as far as he would have carried them? Her disgrace, a stigma left on her family, and the loss of all that character which upholds a woman in her own estimation and in that of the world. I would not go so far as to say that she did not at times betray an anxiety to retain him under the spell of her fascination, as, for instance, when she is said to have cast her eyes to the ground in sadness when he announced his intention to leave Avignon; but still I should like to hear her own explanation before I condemned her. And, after all, she was only anxious for the continuance of attentions, respecting which she had made a fixed understanding that they should not exceed the bounds of innocence.

We have no distinct account how her husband regarded the homage of Petrarch to his wife—whether it flattered his vanity, or moved his wrath. As tradition gives him no very good character for temper, the latter supposition is the more probable. Every morning that he went out he might hear from some kind friend the praises of a new sonnet which Petrarch had written on his wife; and, when he came back to dinner, of course his good humour was not improved by the intelligence. He was in the habit of scolding her till she wept; he married seven months after her death, and, from all that is known of him, appears to have been a bad husband. I suspect that Laura paid dearly for her poet's idolatry.

No incidents of Petrarch's life have been transmitted to us for the first year or two after his attachment to Laura commenced. He seems to have continued at Avignon, prosecuting his studies and feeding his passion.

James Colonna, his friend and patron, was promoted in 1328 to the bishopric of Lombes in Gascony; and in the year 1330 he went from Avignon to take possession of his diocese, and invited Petrarch to accompany him to his residence. No invitation could be more acceptable to our poet: they set out at the end of March, 1330. In order to reach Lombes, it was necessary to cross the whole of Languedoc, and to pass through Montpelier, Narbonne, and Toulouse. Petrarch already knew Montpelier, where he had, or ought to have, studied the law for four years.

Full of enthusiasm for Rome, Petrarch was rejoiced to find at Narbonne the city which had been the first Roman colony planted

among the Gauls. This colony had been formed entirely of Roman citizens, and, in order to reconcile them to their exile, the city was built like a little image of Rome. It had its capitol, its baths, arches, and fountains; all which works were worthy of the Roman name. In passing through Narbonne, Petrarch discovered a number of ancient monuments and inscriptions.

Our travellers thence proceeded to Toulouse, where they passed several days. This city, which was known even before the foundation of Rome, is called, in some ancient Roman acts, "Roma Garumnae." It was famous in the classical ages for cultivating literature. After the fall of the Roman empire, the successive incursions of the Visigoths, the Saracens, and the Normans, for a long time silenced the Muses at Toulouse; but they returned to their favourite haunt after ages of barbarism had passed away. De Sade says, that what is termed Provençal poetry was much more cultivated by the Languedocians than by the Provençals, properly so called. The city of Toulouse was considered as the principal seat of this earliest modern poetry, which was carried to perfection in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, under the patronage of the Counts of Toulouse, particularly Raimond V., and his son, Raimond VI. Petrarch speaks with high praise of those poets in his Triumphs of Love. It has been alleged that he owed them this mark of his regard for their having been so useful to him in his Italian poetry; and Nostradamus even accuses him of having stolen much from them. But Tassoni, who understood the Provençal poets better than Nostradamus, defends him successfully from this absurd accusation.

Although Provençal poetry was a little on its decline since the days of the Dukes of Aquitaine and the Counts of Toulouse, it was still held in honour; and, when Petrarch arrived, the Floral games had been established at Toulouse during six years.*

Ere long, however, our travellers found less agreeable objects of curiosity, that formed a sad contrast with the chivalric manners, the floral games, and the gay poetry of southern France. Bishop Colonna and Petrarch had intended to remain for some time at Toulouse; but their sojourn was abridged by their horror at a tragic event† in the principal monastery of the place. There

* "The Floral games were instituted in France in 1324. They were founded by Clementina Isaure, Countess of Toulouse, and annually celebrated in the month of May. The Countess published an edict, which assembled all the poets of France, in artificial arbours, dressed with flowers; and he that produced the best poem was rewarded with a violet of gold. There were, likewise, inferior prizes of flowers made in silver. In the meantime, the conquerors were crowned with natural chaplets of their own respective flowers. During the ceremony degrees were also conferred. He who had won a prize three times was pronounced a doctor '*en gaye science*,' the name of the poetry of the Provençal Troubadours. This institution, however fantastic, soon became common through the whole of France."—*Warton's History of English Poetry*, vol. i. p. 467.

† I have transferred the following anecdote from Levati's Viaggi di Petrarca (vol. i. p. 119 et seq.). It behoves me to confess, however, that I recollect no allusion to it in any of Petrarch's letters, and I have found many things in Levati's book which make me distrust his authority.

lived in that monastery a young monk, named Augustin, who was expert in music, and accompanied the psalmody of the religious brothers with beautiful touches on the organ. The superior of the convent, relaxing its discipline, permitted Augustin frequently to mix with the world, in order to teach music, and to improve himself in the art. The young monk was in the habit of familiarly visiting the house of a respectable citizen: he was frequently in the society of his daughter, and, by the express encouragement of her father, undertook to exercise her in the practice of music. Another young man, who was in love with the girl, grew jealous of the monk, who was allowed to converse so familiarly with her, whilst he, her lay admirer, could only have stolen glimpses of her as she passed to church or to public spectacles. He set about the ruin of his supposed rival with cunning atrocity; and, finding that the young woman was infirm in health, suborned a physician, as worthless as himself, to declare that she was pregnant. Her credulous father, without inquiring whether the intelligence was true or false, went to the superior of the convent, and accused Augustin, who, though thunderstruck at the accusation, denied it firmly, and defended himself intrepidly. But the superior was deaf to his plea of innocence, and ordered him to be shut up in his cell, that he might await his punishment. Thither the poor young man was conducted, and threw himself on his bed in a state of horror.

The superior and the elders among the friars thought it a meet fate for the accused that he should be buried alive in a subterranean dungeon, after receiving the terrific sentence of "*Vade in pace.*" At the end of several days the victim dashed out his brains against the walls of his sepulchre. Bishop Colonna, who, it would appear, had no power to oppose this hideous transaction, when he was informed of it, determined to leave the place immediately; and Petrarch in his indignation exclaimed—

"Heu! fuge crudeles terras, fuge littus avarum."—VIRG.

On the 26th of May, 1330, the Bishop of Lombes and Petrarch quitted Toulouse, and arrived at the mansion of the diocese. Lombes—in Latin, Lombarium—lies at the foot of the Pyrenees, only eight leagues from Toulouse. It is small and ill-built, and offers no allurement to the curiosity of the traveller. Till lately it had been a simple abbey of the Augustine monks. The whole of the clergy of the little city, singing psalms, issued out of Lombes to meet their new pastor, who, under a rich canopy, was conducted to the principal church, and there, in his episcopal robes, blessed the people, and delivered an eloquent discourse. Petrarch beheld with admiration the dignified behaviour of the youthful prelate. James Colonna, though accustomed to the wealth and luxury of Rome, came to the Pyrenean rocks with a pleased countenance. "His aspect," says Petrarch, "made it seem as if Italy had been

transported into Gascony." Nothing is more beautiful than the patient endurance of our destiny; yet there are many priests who would suffer translation to a well-paid, though mountainous bishopric, with patience and piety.

The vicinity of the Pyrenees renders the climate of Lombes very severe; and the character and conversation of the inhabitants were scarcely more genial than their climate. But Petrarch found in the Bishop's abode friends who consoled him in this exile among the Lombesians. Two young and familiar inmates of the Bishop's house attracted and returned his attachment. The first of these was Lello di Stefani, a youth of a noble and ancient family in Rome, long attached to the Colonnas. Lello's gifted understanding was improved by study; so Petrarch tells us; and he could have been no ordinary man whom our accomplished poet so highly valued. In his youth he had quitted his studies for the profession of arms; but the return of peace restored him to his literary pursuits. Such was the attachment between Petrarch and Lello, that Petrarch gave him the name of Lælius, the most attached companion of Scipio. The other friend to whom Petrarch attached himself in the house of James Colonna was a young German, extremely accomplished in music. De Sade says that his name was Louis, without mentioning his cognomen. He was a native of Ham, near Bois le Duc, on the left bank of the Rhine between Brabant and Holland. Petrarch, with his Italian prejudices, regarded him as a barbarian by birth; but he was so fascinated by his serene temper and strong judgment, that he singled him out to be the chief of all his friends, and gave him the name of Socrates, noting him as an example that Nature can sometimes produce geniuses in the most unpropitious regions.

After having passed the summer of 1330 at Lombes, the Bishop returned to Avignon, in order to meet his father, the elder Stefano Colonna, and his brother the Cardinal.

The Colonnas were a family of the first distinction in modern Italy. They had been exceedingly powerful during the popedom of Boniface VIII., through the talents of the late Cardinal James Colonna, brother of the famous old Stefano, so well known to Petrarch, and whom he used to call a phœnix sprung up from the ashes of Rome. Their house possessed also an influential public character in the Cardinal Pietro, brother of the younger Stefano. They were formidable from the territories and castles which they possessed, and by their alliance and friendship with Charles, King of Naples. The power of the Colonna family became offensive to Boniface, who, besides, hated the two Cardinals for having opposed the renunciation of Celestine V., which Boniface had fraudulently obtained. Boniface procured a crusade against them. They were beaten, expelled from their castles, and almost exterminated; they implored peace, but in vain; they were driven from Rome, and obliged to seek refuge, some in Sicily,

and others in France. During the time of their exile, Boniface proclaimed it a capital crime to give shelter to any of them.

The Colonnas finally returned to their dignities and property, and afterwards made successful war against the house of their rivals, the Orsini.

John Colonna, the Cardinal, brother of the Bishop of Lombes, and son of old Stefano, was one of the very ablest men at the papal court. He insisted on our poet taking up his abode in his own palace at Avignon. "What good fortune was this for me!" says Petrarch. "This great man never made me feel that he was my superior in station. He was like a father or an indulgent brother; and I lived in his house as if it had been my own." At a subsequent period, we find him on somewhat cooler terms with John Colonna, and complaining that his domestic dependence had, by length of time, become wearisome to him. But great allowance is to be made for such apparent inconsistencies in human attachment. At different times our feelings and language on any subject may be different without being insincere. The truth seems to be that Petrarch looked forward to the friendship of the Colonnas for promotion, which he either received scantily, or not at all; so it is little marvellous if he should have at last felt the tedium of patronage.

For the present, however, this home was completely to Petrarch's taste. It was the rendezvous of all strangers distinguished by their knowledge and talents, whom the papal court attracted to Avignon, which was now the great centre of all political negotiations.

This assemblage of the learned had a powerful influence on Petrarch's fine imagination. He had been engaged for some time in the perusal of Livy, and his enthusiasm for ancient Rome was heightened, if possible, by the conversation of old Stefano Colonna, who dwelt on no subject with so much interest as on the temples and palaces of the ancient city, majestic even in their ruins.

During the bitter persecution raised against his family by Boniface VIII., Stefano Colonna had been the chief object of the Pope's implacable resentment. Though oppressed by the most adverse circumstances, his estates confiscated, his palaces levelled with the ground, and himself driven into exile, the majesty of his appearance, and the magnanimity of his character, attracted the respect of strangers wherever he went. He had the air of a sovereign prince rather than of an exile, and commanded more regard than monarchs in the height of their ostentation.

In the picture of his times, Stefano makes a noble and commanding figure. If the reader, however, happens to search into that period of Italian history, he will find many facts to cool the romance of his imagination respecting all the Colonna family. They were, in plain truth, an oppressive aristocratic family. The portion of Italy which they and their tyrannical rivals possessed

was infamously governed. The highways were rendered impassable by banditti, who were in the pay of contesting feudal lords; and life and property were everywhere insecure.

Stefano, nevertheless, seems to have been a man formed for better times. He improved in the school of misfortune—the serenity of his temper remained unclouded by adversity, and his faculties unimpaired by age.

Among the illustrious strangers who came to Avignon at this time, was our countryman, Richard de Bury, then accounted the most learned man of England. He arrived at Avignon in 1331, having been sent to the Pope by Edward III. De Sade conceives that the object of his embassy was to justify his sovereign before the Pontiff for having confined the Queen-mother in the castle of Risings, and for having caused her favourite, Roger de Mortimer, to be hanged. It was a matter of course that so illustrious a stranger as Richard de Bury should be received with distinction by Cardinal Colonna. Petrarch eagerly seized the opportunity of forming his acquaintance, confident that De Bury could give him valuable information on many points of geography and history. They had several conversations. Petrarch tells us that he entreated the learned Englishman to make him acquainted with the true situation of the isle of Thule, of which the ancients speak with much uncertainty, but which their best geographers place at the distance of some days' navigation from the north of England. De Bury was, in all probability, puzzled with the question, though he did not like to confess his ignorance. He excused himself by promising to inquire into the subject as soon as he should get back to his books in England, and to write to him the best information he could afford. It does not appear, however, that he performed his promise.

De Bury's stay at the court of Avignon was very short. King Edward, it is true, sent him a second time to the Pope, two years afterwards, on important business. The seeds of discord between France and England began to germinate strongly, and that circumstance probably occasioned De Bury's second mission. Unfortunately, however, Petrarch could not avail himself of his return so as to have further interviews with the English scholar. Petrarch wrote repeatedly to De Bury for his promised explanations respecting Thule; but, whether our countryman had found nothing in his library to satisfy his inquiries, or was prevented by his public occupations, there is no appearance of his having ever answered Petrarch's letters.

Stefano Colonna the younger had brought with him to Avignon his son Agapito, who was destined for the church, that he might be educated under the eyes of the Cardinal and the Bishop, who were his uncles. These two prelates joined with their father in entreating Petrarch to undertake the superintendence of Agapito's studies. Our poet, avaricious of his time, and jealous of his inde-

pendence, was at first reluctant to undertake the charge; but, from his attachment to the family, at last accepted it. De Sade tells us that Petrarch was not successful in the young man's education; and, from a natural partiality for the hero of his biography, lays the blame on his pupil. At the same time he acknowledges that a man with poetry in his head and love in his heart was not the most proper mentor in the world for a youth who was to be educated for the church. At this time, Petrarch's passion for Laura continued to haunt his peace with incessant violence. She had received him at first with good-humour and affability; but it was only while he set strict bounds to the expression of his attachment. He had not, however, sufficient self-command to comply with these terms. His constant assiduities, his eyes continually riveted upon her, and the wildness of his looks, convinced her of his inordinate attachment; her virtue took alarm; she retired whenever he approached her, and even covered her face with a veil whilst he was present, nor would she condescend to the slightest action or look that might seem to countenance his passion.

Petrarch complains of these severities in many of his melancholy sonnets. Meanwhile, if fame could have been a balm to love, he might have been happy. His reputation as a poet was increasing, and his compositions were read with universal approbation.

The next interesting event in our poet's life was a larger course of travels, which he took through the north of France, through Flanders, Brabant, and a part of Germany, subsequently to his tour in Languedoc. Petrarch mentions that he undertook this journey about the twenty-fifth year of his age. He was prompted to travel not only by his curiosity to observe men and manners, by his desire of seeing monuments of antiquity, and his hopes of discovering the MSS. of ancient authors, but also, we may believe, by his wish, if it were possible, to escape from himself, and to forget Laura.

From Paris Petrarch wrote as follows to Cardinal Colonna. "I have visited Paris, the capital of the whole kingdom of France. I entered it in the same state of mind that was felt by Apuleius when he visited Hypata, a city of Thessaly, celebrated for its magic, of which such wonderful things were related, looking again and again at every object, in solicitous suspense, to know whether all that he had heard of the far-famed place was true or false. Here I pass a great deal of time in observation, and, as the day is too short for my curiosity, I add the night. At last, it seems to me that, by long exploring, I have enabled myself to distinguish between the true and the false in what is related about Paris. But, as the subject would be too tedious for this occasion, I shall defer entering fully into particulars till I can do so *vivâ voce*. My impatience, however, impels me to sketch for you briefly a general idea of this so celebrated city, and of the character of its inhabitants.

"Paris, though always inferior to its fame, and much indebted to the lies of its own people, is undoubtedly a great city. To be sure, I never saw a dirtier place, except Avignon. At the same time, its population contains the most learned of men, and it is like a great basket in which are collected the rarest fruits of every country. From the time that its university was founded, as they say, by Alcuin, the teacher of Charlemagne, there has not been, to my knowledge, a single Parisian of any fame. The great luminaries of the university were all strangers; and, if the love of my country does not deceive me, they were chiefly Italians, such as Pietro Lombardo, Tomaso d'Aquino, Bonaventura, and many others.

"The character of the Parisians is very singular. There was a time when, from the ferocity of their manners, the French were reckoned barbarians. At present the case is wholly changed. A gay disposition, love of society, ease, and playfulness in conversation now characterize them. They seek every opportunity of distinguishing themselves; and make war against all cares with joking, laughing, singing, eating, and drinking. Prone, however, as they are to pleasure, they are not heroic in adversity. The French love their country and their countrymen; they censure with rigour the faults of other nations, but spread a proportionably thick veil over their own defects."

From Paris, Petrarch proceeded to Ghent, of which only he makes mention to the Cardinal, without noticing any of the towns that lie between. It is curious to find our poet out of humour with Flanders on account of the high price of wine, which was not an indigenous article. In the latter part of his life, Petrarch was certainly one of the most abstemious of men; but, at this period, it would seem that he drank good liquor enough to be concerned about its price.

From Ghent he passed on to Liege. "This city is distinguished," he says, "by the riches and the number of its clergy. As I had heard that excellent MSS. might be found there, I stopped in the place for some time. But is it not singular that in so considerable a place I had difficulty to procure ink enough to copy two orations of Cicero's, and the little that I could obtain was as yellow as saffron?"

Petrarch was received at most of the places he visited, and more particularly at Cologne, with marks of great respect; and he was agreeably surprised to find that his reputation had acquired him the partiality and acquaintance of several inhabitants. He was conducted by his new friends to the banks of the Rhine, where the inhabitants were engaged in the performance of a superstitious annual ceremony, which, for its singularity, deserves to be recorded.

"The banks of the river were crowded with a considerable number of women, their persons comely, and their dress elegant.

This great concourse of people seemed to create no confusion. A number of these women, with cheerful countenances, crowned with flowers, bathed their hands and arms in the stream, and uttered, at the same time, some harmonious expressions in a language which I did not understand. I inquired into the cause of this ceremony, and was informed that it arose from a tradition among the people, and particularly among the women, that the impending calamities of the year were carried away by this ablution, and that blessings succeeded in their place. Hence this ceremony is annually renewed, and the ablution performed with unremitting diligence."

The ceremony being finished, Petrarch smiled at their superstition, and exclaimed, "O happy inhabitants of the Rhine, whose waters wash out your miseries, whilst neither the Po nor the Tiber can wash out ours! You transmit your evils to the Britons by means of this river, whilst we send off ours to the Illyrians and the Africans. It seems that our rivers have a slower course."

Petrarch shortened his excursion that he might return the sooner to Avignon, where the Bishop of Lombes had promised to await his return, and take him to Rome.

When he arrived at Lyons, however, he was informed that the Bishop had departed from Avignon for Rome. In the first paroxysm of his disappointment he wrote a letter to his friend, which portrays strongly affectionate feelings, but at the same time an irascible temper. When he came to Avignon, the Cardinal Colonna relieved him from his irritation by acquainting him with the real cause of his brother's departure. The flames of civil dissension had been kindled at Rome between the rival families of Colonna and Orsini. The latter had made great preparations to carry on the war with vigour. In this crisis of affairs, James Colonna had been summoned to Rome to support the interests of his family, and, by his courage and influence, to procure them the succour which they so much required.

Petrarch continued to reside at Avignon for several years after returning from his travels in France and Flanders. It does not appear from his sonnets, during those years, either that his passion for Laura had abated, or that she had given him any more encouragement than heretofore. But in the year 1334, an accident renewed the utmost tenderness of his affections. A terrible affliction visited the city of Avignon. The heat and the drought were so excessive that almost the whole of the common people went about naked to the waist, and, with frenzy and miserable cries, implored Heaven to put an end to their calamities. Persons of both sexes and of all ages had their bodies covered with scales, and changed their skins like serpents.

Laura's constitution was too delicate to resist this infectious malady, and her illness greatly alarmed Petrarch. One day he

asked her physician how she was, and was told by him that her condition was very dangerous: on that occasion he composed the following sonnet:*—

This lovely spirit, if ordain'd to leave
Its mortal tenement before its time,
Heaven's fairest habitation shall receive
And welcome her to breathe its sweetest clime.
If she establish her abode between
Mars and the planet-star of Beauty's queen,
The sun will be obscured, so dense a cloud
Of spirits from adjacent stars will crowd
To gaze upon her beauty infinite.
Say that she fixes on a lower sphere,
Beneath the glorious sun, her beauty soon
Will dim the splendour of inferior stars—
Of Mars, of Venus, Mercury, and the Moon.
She 'll choose not Mars, but higher place than Mars;
She will eclipse all planetary light,
And Jupiter himself will seem less bright.

I trust that I have enough to say in favour of Petrarch to satisfy his rational admirers; but I quote this sonnet as an example of the worst style of Petrarch's poetry. I make the English reader welcome to rate my power of translating it at the very lowest estimation. He cannot go much further down than myself in the scale of valuation, especially if he has Italian enough to know that the exquisite mechanical harmony of Petrarch's style is beyond my reach. It has been alleged that this sonnet shows how much the mind of Petrarch had been influenced by his Platonic studies; but if Plato had written poetry he would never have been so extravagant.

Petrarch, on his return from Germany, had found the old Pope, John XXII., intent on two speculations, to both of which he lent his enthusiastic aid. One of them was a futile attempt to renew the crusades, from which Europe had reposed for a hundred years. The other was the transfer of the holy seat to Rome. The execution of this plan, for which Petrarch sighed as if it were to bring about the millennium, and which was not accomplished by another Pope without embroiling him with his Cardinals, was nevertheless more practicable than capturing Jerusalem. We are told by several Italian writers that the aged Pontiff, moved by repeated entreaties from the Romans, as well as by the remorse of his conscience, thought seriously of effecting this restoration; but the sincerity of his intentions is made questionable by the fact that he never fixed himself at Rome. He wrote, it is true, to Rome in 1333, ordering his palaces and gardens to be repaired; but the troubles which continued to agitate the city were alleged by him as too alarming for his safety there, and he repaired to Bologna to wait for quieter times.

On both of the above subjects, namely, the insane crusades and the more feasible restoration of the papal court to Rome, Petrarch

* Quest' anima gentil che si disparte.—Sonnet xxiii.

wrote with devoted zeal; they are both alluded to in his twenty-second sonnet.

The death of John XXII. left the Cardinals divided into two great factions. The first was that of the French, at the head of which stood Cardinal Taillerand, son of the beautiful Brunissende de Foix, whose charms were supposed to have detained Pope Clement V. in France. The Italian Cardinals, who formed the opposite faction, had for their chief the Cardinal Colonna. The French party, being the more numerous, were, in some sort, masters of the election; they offered the tiara to Cardinal de Commenges, on condition that he would promise *not* to transfer the papal court to Rome. That prelate showed himself worthy of the dignity, by refusing to accept it on such terms.

To the surprise of the world, the choice of the conclave fell at last on James Fournier, said to be the son of a baker at Saverdun, who had been bred as a monk of Citeaux, and always wore the dress of the order. Hence he was called the White Cardinal. He was wholly unlike his portly predecessor John in figure and address, being small in stature, pale in complexion, and weak in voice. He expressed his own astonishment at the honour conferred on him, saying that they had elected an ass. If we may believe Petrarch, he did himself no injustice in likening himself to that quadruped; but our poet was somewhat harsh in his judgment of this Pontiff. He took the name of Benedict XII.

Shortly after his exaltation, Benedict received ambassadors from Rome, earnestly imploring him to bring back the sacred seat to their city; and Petrarch thought he could not serve the embassy better than by publishing a poem in Latin verse, exhibiting Rome in the character of a desolate matron imploring her husband to return to her. Benedict applauded the author of the epistle, but declined complying with its prayer. Instead of revisiting Italy, his Holiness ordered a magnificent and costly palace to be constructed for him at Avignon. Hitherto, it would seem that the Popes had lived in hired houses. In imitation of their Pontiff, the Cardinals set about building superb mansions, to the unbounded indignation of Petrarch, who saw in these new habitations not only a graceless and unchristian spirit of luxury, but a sure indication that their owners had no thoughts of removing to Rome.

In the January of the following year, Pope Benedict presented our poet with the canonicate of Lombes, with the expectancy of the first prebend which should become vacant. This preferment Petrarch is supposed to have owed to the influence of Cardinal Colonna.

The troubles which at this time agitated Italy drew to Avignon, in the year 1335, a personage who holds a pre-eminent interest in the life of Petrarch, namely, Azzo da Correggio, who was sent thither by the Scaligeri of Parma. The State of Parma had be-

longed originally to the popes; but two powerful families, the Rossis and the Correggios, had profited by the quarrels between the church and the empire to usurp the government, and during five-and-twenty years, Gilberto Correggio and Rolando Rossi alternately lost and won the sovereignty, till, at last, the confederate princes took the city, and conferred the government of it on Guido Correggio, the greatest enemy of the Rossis.

Gilbert Correggio left at his death a widow, the sister of Cane de la Scala, and four sons, Guido, Simone, Azzo, and Giovanni. It is only with Azzo that we are particularly concerned in the history of Petrarch.

Azzo was born in the year 1303, being thus a year older than our poet. Originally intended for the church, he preferred the sword to the crozier, and became a distinguished soldier. He married the daughter of Luigi Gonzagua, lord of Mantua. He was a man of bold original spirit, and so indefatigable that he acquired the name of Iron-foot. Nor was his energy merely physical; he read much, and forgot nothing—his memory was a library. Azzo's character, to be sure, even with allowance for turbulent times, is not invulnerable at all points to a rigid scrutiny; and, notwithstanding all the praises of Petrarch, who dedicated to him his Treatise on a Solitary Life in 1366, his political career contained some acts of perfidy. But we must inure ourselves, in the biography of Petrarch, to his over-estimation of favourites in the article of morals.

It was not long ere Petrarch was called upon to give a substantial proof of his regard for Azzo. After the seizure of Parma by the confederate princes, Marsilio di Rossi, brother of Rolando, went to Paris to demand assistance from the French king. The King of Bohemia had given over the government of Parma to him and his brothers, and the Rossi now saw it with grief assigned to his enemies, the Correggios. Marsilio could obtain no succour from the French, who were now busy in preparing for war with the English; so he carried to the Pope at Avignon his complaints against the alleged injustice of the lords of Verona and the Correggios in breaking an express treaty which they had made with the house of Rossi.

Azzo had the threefold task of defending, before the Pope's tribunal, the lords of Verona, whose envoy he was; the rights of his family, which were attacked; and his own personal character, which was charged with some grave objections. Revering the eloquence and influence of Petrarch, he importuned him to be his public defender. Our poet, as we have seen, had studied the law, but had never followed the profession. "It is not my vocation," he says, in his preface to his Familiar Epistles, "to undertake the defence of others. I detest the bar; I love retirement I despise money; and, if I tried to let out my tongue for hire, my nature would revolt at the attempt."

But what Petrarch would not undertake either from taste or motives of interest, he undertook at the call of friendship. He pleaded the cause of Azzo before the Pope and Cardinals; it was a finely-interesting cause, that afforded a vast field for his eloquence. He brought off his client triumphantly; and the Rossis were defeated in their demand.

At the same time, it is a proud trait in Petrarch's character that he showed himself on this occasion not only an orator and a lawyer, but a perfect gentleman. In the midst of all his zealous pleading, he stooped neither to satire nor personality against the opposing party. He could say, with all the boldness of truth, in a letter to Ugolino di Rossi, the Bishop of Parma, "I pleaded against your house for Azzo. Correggio, but you were present at the pleading; do me justice, and confess that I carefully avoided not only attacks on your family and reputation, but even those railleries in which advocates so much delight."

On this occasion, Azzo had brought to Avignon, as his colleague in the lawsuit, Guglielmo da Pastrengo, who exercised the office of judge and notary at Verona. He was a man of deep knowledge in the law; versed, besides, in every branch of elegant learning, he was a poet into the bargain. In Petrarch's many books of epistles, there are few letters addressed by him to this personage; but it is certain that they contracted a friendship at this period which endured for life.

All this time the Bishop of Lombes still continued at Rome; and, from time to time, solicited his friend Petrarch to join him. "Petrarch would have gladly joined him," says De Sade; "but he was detained at Avignon by his attachment to John Colonna and his love of Laura:" a whimsical junction of detaining causes, in which the fascination of the Cardinal may easily be supposed to have been weaker than that of Laura. In writing to our poet, at Avignon, the Bishop rallied Petrarch on the imaginary existence of the object of his passion. Some stupid readers of the Bishop's letter, in subsequent times, took it into their heads that there was a literal proof in the prelate's jesting epistle of our poet's passion for Laura being a phantom and a fiction. But, possible as it may be, that the Bishop in reality suspected him to exaggerate the flame of his devotion for the two great objects of his idolatry, Laura and St. Augustine, he writes in a vein of pleasantry that need not be taken for grave accusation. "You are befooling us all, my dear Petrarch," says the prelate; "and it is wonderful that at so tender an age (Petrarch's tender age was at this time thirty-one) you can deceive the world with so much art and success. And, not content with deceiving the world, you would fain deceive Heaven itself. You make a semblance of loving St. Augustine and his works; but, in your heart, you love the poets and the philosophers. Your Laura is a phantom created by your imagination for the exercise of your poetry. Your verse, your

love, your sighs, are all a fiction; or, if there is anything real in your passion, it is not for the lady Laura, but for the laurel—*that is*, the crown of poets. I have been your dupe for some time, and, whilst you showed a strong desire to visit Rome, I hoped to welcome you there. But my eyes are now opened to all your rogueries, which nevertheless, will not prevent me from loving you."

Petrarch, in his answer to the Bishop,* says, "My father, if I love the poets, I only follow, in this respect, the example of St. Augustine. I take the sainted father himself to witness the sincerity of my attachment to him. He is now in a place where he can neither deceive nor be deceived. I flatter myself that he pities my errors, especially when he recalls his own." St. Augustine had been somewhat profligate in his younger days.

"As to Laura," continues the poet, "would to Heaven that she were only an imaginary personage, and my passion for her only a pastime! Alas! it is a madness which it would be difficult and painful to feign for any length of time; and what an extravagance it would be to affect such a passion! One may counterfeit illness by action, by voice, and by manner, but no one in health can give himself the true air and complexion of disease. How often have you yourself been witness of my paleness and my sufferings! I know very well that you speak only in irony: it is your favourite figure of speech, but I hope that time will cicatrize these wounds of my spirit, and that Augustine, whom I pretend to love, will furnish me with a defence against a Laura who does not exist."

Years had now elapsed since Petrarch had conceived his passion for Laura; and it was obviously doomed to be a source of hopeless torment to him as long as he should continue near her; for she could breathe no more encouragement on his love than what was barely sufficient to keep it alive; and, if she had bestowed more favour on him, the consequences might have been ultimately most tragic to both of them. His own reflections, and the advice of his friends, suggested that absence and change of objects were the only means likely to lessen his misery; he determined, therefore, to travel once more, and set out for Rome in 1335.

The wish to assuage his passion, by means of absence, was his principal motive for going again upon his travels; but, before he could wind up his resolution to depart, the state of his mind bordered on distraction. One day he observed a country girl washing the veil of Laura; a sudden trembling seized him—and, though the heat of the weather was intense, he grew cold and shivered. For some time he was incapable of applying to study or business. His soul, he said, was like a field of battle, where his passion and reason held continual conflict. In his calmer moments, many agreeable motives for travelling suggested them-

* Dated 21st December, 1335.

selves to his mind. He had a strong desire to visit Rome, where he was sure of finding the kindest welcome from the Bishop of Lombes. He was to pass through Paris also; and there he had left some valued friends, to whom he had promised that he would return. At the head of those friends were Dionisio dal Borgo San Sepolcro and Roberto Bardi, a Florentine, whom the Pope had lately made chancellor of the Church of Paris, and given him the canonship of Nôtre Dame. Dionisio dal Borgo was a native of Tuscany, and one of the Roberti family. His name in literature was so considerable that Filippo Villani thought it worth while to write his life. Petrarch wrote his funeral eulogy, and alludes to Dionisio's power of reading futurity by the stars. But Petrarch had not a grain of faith in astrology; on the contrary, he has himself recorded that he derided it. After having obtained, with some difficulty, the permission of Cardinal Colonna, he took leave of his friends at Avignon, and set out for Marseilles. Embarking there in a ship that was setting sail for Civita Vecchia, he concealed his name, and gave himself out for a pilgrim going to worship at Rome. Great was his joy when, from the deck, he could discover the coast of his beloved Italy. It was a joy, nevertheless, chastened by one indomitable recollection—that of the idol he had left behind. On his landing he perceived a laurel tree; its name seemed to typify her who dwelt for ever in his heart: he flew to embrace it; but in his transports overlooked a brook that was between them, into which he fell—and the accident caused him to swoon. Always occupied with Laura, he says, "On those shores washed by the Tyrrhene sea, I beheld that stately laurel which always warms my imagination, and, through my impatience, fell breathless into the intervening stream. I was alone, and in the woods, yet I blushed at my own heedlessness; for, to the reflecting mind, no witness is necessary to excite the emotion of shame."

It was not easy for Petrarch to pass from the coast of Tuscany to Rome; for war between the Ursini and Colonna houses had been renewed with more fury than ever, and filled all the surrounding country with armed men. As he had no escort, he took refuge in the castle of Capranica, where he was hospitably received by Orso, Count of Anguillara, who had married Agnes Colonna, sister of the Cardinal and the Bishop. In his letter to the latter, Petrarch luxuriates in describing the romantic and rich landscape of Capranica, a country believed by the ancients to have been the first that was cultivated under the reign of Saturn. He draws, however, a frightful contrast to its rural picture in the horrors of war which here prevailed. "Peace," he says, "is the only charm which I could not find in this beautiful region. The shepherd, instead of guarding against wolves, goes armed into the woods to defend himself against men. The labourer, in a coat of mail, uses a lance instead of a goad, to drive his cattle.

The fowler covers himself with a shield as he draws his nets; the fisherman carries a sword whilst he hooks his fish; and the native draws water from the well in an old rusty casque, instead of a pail. In a word, arms are used here as tools and implements for all the labours of the field, and all the wants of men. In the night are heard dreadful howlings round the walls of towns, and in the day terrible voices crying incessantly to arms. What music is this compared with those soft and harmonious sounds which I drew from my lute at Avignon!"

On his arrival at Capranica, Petrarch despatched a courier to the Bishop of Lombes, informing him where he was, and of his inability to get to Rome, all the roads to it being beset by the enemy. The Bishop expressed great joy at his friend's arrival in Italy, and went to meet him at Capranica, with Stefano Colonna, his brother, senator of Rome. They had with them only a troop of one hundred horsemen; and, considering that the enemy kept possession of the country with five hundred men, it is wonderful that they met with no difficulties on their route; but the reputation of the Colonnas had struck terror into the hostile camp. They entered Rome without having had a single skirmish with the enemy. Stefano Colonna, in his quality of senator, occupied the Capitol, where he assigned apartments to Petrarch; and the poet was lodged on that famous hill which Scipio, Metellus, and Pompey, had ascended in triumph. Petrarch was received and treated by the Colonnas like a child of their family. The venerable old Stefano, who had known him at Avignon, loaded our poet with kindness. But, of all the family, it would seem that Petrarch delighted most in the conversation of Giovanni da S. Vito, a younger brother of the aged Stefano, and uncle of the Cardinal and Bishop. Their tastes were congenial. Giovanni had made a particular study of the antiquities of Rome; he was, therefore, a most welcome cicerone to our poet, being, perhaps, the only Roman then alive, who understood the subject deeply, if we except Cola di Rienzo, of whom we shall soon have occasion to speak.

In company with Giovanni, Petrarch inspected the relics of the "eternal city:" the former was more versed than his companion in ancient history, but the other surpassed him in acquaintance with modern times, as well as with the objects of antiquity that stood immediately before them.

What an interesting object is Petrarch contemplating the ruins of Rome! He wrote to the Cardinal Colonna as follows:—"I gave you so long an account of Capranica that you may naturally expect a still longer description of Rome. My materials for this subject are, indeed, inexhaustible; but they will serve for some future opportunity. At present, I am so wonder-struck by so many great objects that I know not where to begin. One circumstance, however, I cannot omit, which has turned out contrary to

your surmises. You represented to me that Rome was a city in ruins, and that it would not come up to the imagination I had formed of it; but this has not happened—on the contrary, my most sanguine expectations have been surpassed. Rome is greater, and her remains are more awful, than my imagination had conceived. It is not matter of wonder that she acquired universal dominion. I am only surprised that it was so late before she came to it."

In the midst of his meditations among the relics of Rome, Petrarch was struck by the ignorance about their forefathers, with which the natives looked on those monuments. The veneration which they had for them was vague and uninformed. "It is lamentable," he says, "that nowhere in the world is Rome less known than at Rome."

It is not exactly known in what month Petrarch left the Roman capital; but, between his departure from that city, and his return to the banks of the Rhone, he took an extensive tour over Europe. He made a voyage along its southern coasts, passed the straits of Gibraltar, and sailed as far northward as the British shores. During his wanderings, he wrote a letter to Tommaso da Messina, containing a long geographical dissertation on the island of Thule.

Petrarch approached the British shores; why were they not fated to have the honour of receiving him? Ah! but who was there, then, in England that was capable of receiving him? Chaucer was but a child. We had the names of some learned men, but our language had no literature. Time works wonders in a few centuries; and England, *now* proud of her Shakespeare and her Verulam, looks not with envy on the glory of any earthly nation. During his excitement by these travels, a singular change took place in our poet's habitual feelings. He recovered his health and spirits; he could bear to think of Laura with equanimity, and his countenance resumed the cheerfulness that was natural to a man in the strength of his age. Nay, he became so sanguine in his belief that he had overcome his passion as to jest at his past sufferings; and, in this gay state of mind, he came back to Avignon. This was the crowning misfortune of his life. He saw Laura once more; he was enthralled anew; and he might now laugh in agony at his late self-congratulations on his delivery from her enchantment. With all the pity that we bestow on unfortunate love, and with all the respect that we owe to its constancy, still we cannot look but with a regret amounting to impatience on a man returning to the spot that was to rekindle his passion as recklessly as a moth to the candle, and binding himself over for life to an affection that was worse than hopeless, inasmuch as its success would bring more misery than its failure. It is said that Petrarch, if it had not been for this passion, would not have been the poet that he was. Not, perhaps, so good an amatory poet; but I firmly believe that he would have been a more various

and masculine, and, upon the whole, *a greater poet*, if he had never been bewitched by Laura. However, *he did* return to take possession of his canonicate at Lombes, and to lose possession of his peace of mind.

In the April of the following year, 1336, he made an excursion, in company with his brother Gherardo, to the top of Mount Ventoux, in the neighbourhood of Avignon; a full description of which he sent in a letter to Dionisio dal Borgo a San Sepolcro; but there is nothing peculiarly interesting in this occurrence.

A more important event in his life took place during the following year, 1337—namely, that he had a son born to him, whom he christened by the name of John, and to whom he acknowledged his relationship of paternity. With all his philosophy and platonic raptures about Laura, Petrarch was still subject to the passions of ordinary men, and had a mistress at Avignon who was kinder to him than Laura. Her name and history have been consigned to inscrutable obscurity: the same woman afterwards bore him a daughter, whose name was Francesca, and who proved a great solace to him in his old age. His biographers extol the magnanimity of Laura for displaying no anger at our poet for what they choose to call this discovery of his infidelity to her; but, as we have no reason to suppose that Laura ever bestowed one favour on Petrarch beyond a pleasant look, it is difficult to perceive her right to command his unspotted faith. At all events, she would have done no good to her own reputation if she had stormed at the lapse of her lover's virtue.

In a small city like Avignon, the scandal of his intrigue would naturally be a matter of regret to his friends and of triumph to his enemies. Petrarch felt his situation, and, unable to calm his mind either by the advice of his friend Dionisio dal Borgo, or by the perusal of his favourite author, St. Augustine, he resolved to seek a rural retreat, where he might at least hide his tears and his mortification. Unhappily he chose a spot not far enough from Laura—namely, Vaucluse, which is fifteen Italian, or about fourteen English, miles from Avignon.

Vaucluse, or Vallis Clausa, the shut-up valley, is a most beautiful spot, watered by the windings of the Sorgue. Along the river there are on one side most verdant plains and meadows, here and there shadowed by trees. On the other side are hills covered with corn and vineyards. Where the Sorgue rises, the view terminates in the cloud-capt ridges of the mountains Luberoux and Ventoux. This was the place which Petrarch had visited with such delight when he was a schoolboy, and at the sight of which he exclaimed "that he would prefer it as a residence to the most splendid city."

It is, indeed, one of the loveliest seclusions in the world. It terminates in a semicircle of rocks of stupendous height, that seem to have been hewn down perpendicularly. At the head and

centre of the vast amphitheatre, and at the foot of one of its enormous rocks, there is a cavern of proportional size, hollowed out by the hand of nature. Its opening is an arch sixty feet high; but it is a double cavern, there being an interior one with an entrance thirty feet high. In the midst of these there is an oval basin, having eighteen fathoms for its longest diameter, and from this basin rises the copious stream which forms the Sorgue. The surface of the fountain is black, an appearance produced by its depth, from the darkness of the rocks, and the obscurity of the cavern; for, on being brought to light, nothing can be clearer than its water. Though beautiful to the eye, it is harsh to the taste, but is excellent for tanning and dyeing; and it is said to promote the growth of a plant which fattens oxen and is good for hens during incubation. Strabo and Pliny the naturalist both speak of its possessing this property.

The river Sorgue, which issues from this cavern, divides in its progress into various branches; it waters many parts of Provence, receives several tributary streams, and, after reuniting its branches, falls into the Rhone near Avignon.

Resolving to fix his residence here, Petrarch bought a little cottage and an adjoining field, and repaired to Vaucluse with no other companions than his books. To this day the ruins of a small house are shown at Vaucluse, which tradition says was his habitation.

If his object was to forget Laura, the composition of sonnets upon her in this hermitage was unlikely to be an antidote to his recollections. It would seem as if he meant to cherish rather than to get rid of his love. But, if he nursed his passion, it was a dry-nursing; for he led a lonely, ascetic, and, if it were not for his studies, we might say a savage life. In one of his letters, written not long after his settling at Vaucluse, he says, "Here I make war upon my senses, and treat them as my enemies. My eyes, which have drawn me into a thousand difficulties, see no longer either gold, or precious stones, or ivory, or purple; they behold nothing save the water, the firmament, and the rocks. The only female who comes within their sight is a swarthy old woman, dry and parched as the Lybian deserts. My ears are no longer courted by those harmonious instruments and voices which have so often transported my soul: they hear nothing but the lowing of cattle, the bleating of sheep, the warbling of birds, and the murmurs of the river.

"I keep silence from noon till night. There is no one to converse with; for the good people, employed in spreading their nets, or tending their vines and orchards, are no great adepts at conversation. I often content myself with the brown bread of the fisherman, and even eat it with pleasure. Nay, I almost prefer it to white bread. This old fisherman, who is as hard as iron, earnestly remonstrates against my manner of life; and assures me

that I cannot long hold out. I am, on the contrary, convinced that it is easier to accustom one's self to a plain diet than to the luxuries of a feast. But still I have my luxuries—figs, raisins, nuts, and almonds. I am fond of the fish with which this stream abounds, and I sometimes amuse myself with spreading the nets. As to my dress, there is an entire change; you would take me for a labourer or a shepherd.

"My mansion resembles that of Cato or Fabricius. My whole house-establishment consists of myself, my old fisherman and his wife, and a dog. My fisherman's cottage is contiguous to mine; when I want him I call; when I no longer need him, he returns to his cottage.

"I have made two gardens that please me wonderfully. I do not think they are to be equalled in all the world. And I must confess to you a more than female weakness with which I am haunted. I am positively angry that there is anything so beautiful out of Italy.

"One of these gardens is shady, formed for contemplation, and sacred to Apollo. It overhangs the source of the river, and is terminated by rocks, and by places accessible only to birds. The other is nearer my cottage, of an aspect less severe, and devoted to Bacchus; and what is extremely singular, it is in the midst of a rapid river. The approach to it is over a bridge of rocks; and there is a natural grotto under the rocks, which gives them the appearance of a rustic bridge. Into this grotto the rays of the sun never penetrate. I am confident that it much resembles the place where Cicero went to declaim. It invites to study. Hither I retreat during the noontide hours; my mornings are engaged upon the hills, or in the garden sacred to Apollo. Here I would most willingly pass my days, were I not too near Avignon, and too far from Italy. For why should I conceal this weakness of my soul? I love Italy, and I hate Avignon. The pestilential influence of this horrid place empoisons the pure air of Vaucluse, and will compel me to quit my retirement."

It is clear that he was not supremely contented in his solitude with his self-drawn mental resources. His friends at Avignon came seldom to see him. Travelling even short distances was difficult in those days. Even we, in the present day, can remember when the distance of fourteen miles presented a troublesome journey. The few guests who came to him could not expect very exquisite dinners, cooked by the brown old woman and her husband the fisherman; and, though our poet had a garden consecrated to Bacchus, he had no cellar devoted to the same deity. His few friends, therefore, who visited him, thought their angel visits acts of charity. If he saw his friends seldom, however, he had frequent visitants in strangers who came to Vaucluse, as a place long celebrated for its natural beauties, and now made illustrious by the character and compositions of our poet. Among these

there were persons distinguished for their rank or learning, who came from the farthest parts of France and from Italy, to see and converse with Petrarch. Some of them even sent before them considerable presents, which, though kindly meant, were not acceptable.

Vaucluse is in the diocese of Cavaillon, a small city about two miles distant from our poet's retreat. Philip de Cabassoles was the bishop, a man of high rank and noble family. His disposition, according to Petrarch's usual praise of his friends, was highly benevolent and humane; he was well versed in literature, and had distinguished abilities. No sooner was the poet settled in his retirement, than he visited the Bishop at his palace near Vaucluse. The latter gave him a friendly reception, and returned his visits frequently. Another much estimated, his friend since their childhood, Guido Sette, also repaired at times to his humble mansion, and relieved his solitude in the shut-up valley.*

Without some daily and constant occupation even the bright mind of Petrarch would have rusted, like the finest steel when it is left unscoured. But he continued his studies with an ardour that commands our wonder and respect; and it was at Vaucluse that he either meditated or wrote his most important compositions. Here he undertook a history of Rome, from Romulus down to Titus Vespasian. This Herculean task he never finished; but there remain two fragments of it, namely, four books, De Rebus Memorandis, and another tract entitled Vitarum Virorum Illustrium Epitome, being sketches of illustrious men from the founder of Rome down to Fabricius.

About his poem, Africa, I shall only say for the present that he began this Latin epic at Vaucluse, that its hero is his idolized Roman, Scipio Africanus, that it gained him a reputation over Europe, and that he was much pleased with it himself, but that his admiration of it in time cooled down so much, that at last he was annoyed when it was mentioned to him, and turned the conversation, if he could, to a different subject. Nay, it is probable, that if it had not been for Boccaccio and Coluccio Salutati, who, long after he had left Vaucluse, importuned him to finish and publish it, his Africa would not have come down to posterity.

Petrarch alludes in one of his letters to an excursion which he made in 1338, in company with a man whose rank was above his wisdom. He does not name him, but it seems clearly to have been Humbert II., Dauphin of the Viennois. The Cardinal Colonna forced our poet into this pilgrimage to Baume, famous for its adjacent cavern, where, according to the tradition of the country, Mary Magdalen passed thirty years of repentance.

* Guido Sette of Luni, in the Genoese territory, studied law together with Petrarch; but took to it with better liking. He devoted himself to the business of the bar at Avignon with much reputation. But the legal and clerical professions were then often united: for Guido rose in the church to be an archbishop. He died in 1368, renowned as a church luminary.

In that holy but horrible cavern, as Petrarch calls it, they remained three days and three nights, though Petrarch sometimes gave his comrades the slip, and indulged in rambles among the hills and forests; he composed a short poem, however, on St. Mary Magdalen, which is as dull as the cave itself. The Dauphin Humbert was not a bright man; but he seems to have contracted a friendly familiarity with our poet, if we may judge by a letter which Petrarch indited to him about this time, frankly reproaching him with his political neutrality in the affairs of Europe. It was supposed that the Cardinal Colonna incited him to write it. A struggle that was now impending between France and England engaged all Europe on one side or other. The Emperor Lewis had intimated to Humbert that he must follow him in this war, he, the Dauphin, being arch-seneschal of Arles and Vienne. Next year, the arch-seneschal received an invitation from Philip of Valois to join him with his troops at Amiens as vassal of France. The Dauphin tried to back out of the dilemma between his two suitors by frivolous excuses to both, all the time determining to assist neither. In 1338 he came to Avignon, and the Pope gave him his palace at the bridge of the Sorgue for his habitation. Here the poor craven, beset on one side by threatening letters from Philip of Valois, and on the other by importunities from the French party at the papal court, remained in Avignon till July, 1339, after Petrarch had let loose upon him his epistolary eloquence.

This letter, dated April, 1339, is, according to De Sade's opinion, full of powerful persuasion. I cannot say that it strikes me as such. After calling Christ to witness that he writes to the Dauphin in the spirit of friendship, he reminds him that Europe had never exhibited so mighty and interesting a war as that which had now sprung up between the kings of France and England, nor one that opened so vast a field of glory for the brave. "All the princes and their people," he says, "are anxious about its issue, especially those between the Alps and the ocean, who take arms at the crash of the neighbouring tumult; whilst you alone go to sleep amidst the clouds of the coming storm. To say the truth, if there was nothing more than shame to awaken you, it ought to rouse you from this lethargy. I had thought you," he continues, "a man desirous of glory. You are young and in the strength of life. What, then, in the name of God, keeps you inactive? Do you fear fatigue? Remember what Sallust says—'Idle enjoyments were made for women, fatigue was made for men.' Do you fear death? Death is the last debt we owe to nature, and man ought not to fear it; certainly he ought not to fear it more than sleep and sluggishness. Aristotle, it is true, calls death the last of horrible things; but, mind, he does not call it the most horrible of things." In this manner, our poet goes on moralizing on the blessings of an early death, and the great advan-

tage that it would have afforded to some excellent Roman heroes if they had met with it sooner. The only thing like a sensible argument that he urges is, that Humbert could not expect to save himself even by neutrality, but must ultimately become the prey of the victor, and be punished like the Alban Metius, whom Tullus Hostilius caused to be torn asunder by horses that pulled his limbs in different directions. The pedantic epistle had no effect on Humbert.

Meanwhile, Italy had no repose more than the rest of Europe, but its troubles gave a happy occasion to Petrarch to see once more his friend, Guglielmo Pastrengo, who, in 1338, came to Avignon, from Mastino della Scala, lord of Verona.

The moment Petrarch heard of his friend's arrival he left his hermitage to welcome him; but scarcely had he reached the fatal city when he saw the danger of so near an approach to the woman he so madly loved, and was aware that he had no escape from the eyes of Laura but by flight. He returned, therefore, all of a sudden to Vaucluse, without waiting for a sight of Pastrengo. Shortly after he had quitted the house of Lælius, where he usually lodged when he went to Avignon, Guglielmo, expecting to find him there, knocked at the door, but no one opened it—called out, but no one answered him. He therefore wrote him a little billet, saying, "My dear Petrarch, where have you hid yourself, and whither have you vanished? What is the meaning of all this?" The poet received this note at Vaucluse, and sent an explanation of his flight, sincere indeed as to good feelings, but prolix as usual in the expression of them. Pastrengo sent him a kind reply, and soon afterwards did him the still greater favour of visiting him at Vaucluse, and helping him to cultivate his garden.

Petrarch's flame for Laura was in reality unabated. One day he met her in the streets of Avignon; for he had not always resolution enough to keep out of the western Babylon. Laura cast a kind look upon him, and said, "Petrarch, you are tired of loving me." This incident produced one of the finest sonnets, beginning—

Io non fu d'amar voi lassato unquanco.

Tired, did you say, of loving you? Oh, no!
I ne'er shall tire of the unwearying flame.
But I am weary, kind and cruel dame,
With tears that uselessly and ceaseless flow,
Scorning myself, and scorn'd by you. I long
For death: but let no gravestone hold in view
Our names conjoin'd; nor tell my passion strong
Upon the dust that glow'd through life for you.
And yet this heart of amorous faith demands,
Deserves, a better boon; but cruel, hard
As is my fortune, I will bless Love's bands
For ever, if you give me this reward.

In 1339, he composed among other sonnets, those three, the lxii., lxxiv., and lxxv., which are confessedly master-pieces of their kind, as well as three canzoni to the eyes of Laura, which

the Italians call the three sister Graces, and worship as divine.* The critic Tassoni himself could not censure them, and called them the queens of song. At this period, however seldom he may have visited Avignon, he evidently sought rather to cherish than subdue his fatal attachment. A celebrated painter, Simone Martini of Siena, came to Avignon. He was the pupil of Giotto, not exquisite in drawing, but famous for taking spirited likenesses.

Petrarch persuaded Simone to favour him with a miniature likeness of Laura; and this treasure the poet for ever carried about with him. In gratitude he addressed two sonnets to the artist, whose fame, great as it was, was heightened by the poetical reward. Vasari tells us that Simone also painted the pictures of both lovers in the chapel of St. Maria Novella at Florence; that Simone was a sculptor as well as a painter, and that he copied those pictures in marbles which, according to Baldelli, are still extant in the house of the Signore Pruzzi.

An anecdote relating to this period of Petrarch's life is given by De Sade, which, if accepted with entire credence, must inspire us with astonishment at the poet's devotion to his literary pursuits. He had now, in 1339, put the first hand to his epic poem, the Scipiade; and one of his friends, De Sade believes that it was the Bishop of Lombes, fearing lest he might injure his health by overzealous application, went to ask him for the key of his library, which the poet gave up. The Bishop then locked up his books and papers, and commanded him to abstain from reading and writing for ten days. Petrarch obeyed; but on the first day of this literary Ramazan, he was seized with ennui, on the second with a severe headache, and on the third with symptoms of fever; the Bishop relented, and permitted the student to return to his books and papers.

Petrarch was at this time delighted, in his solitude of Vaucluse, to hear of the arrival at Avignon of one of his dearest friends. This was Dionisio dal Borgo a San Sepolcro, who, being now advanced in years, had resigned his pulpit in the University of Paris, in order to return to his native country, and came to Avignon with the intention of going by sea to Florence. Petrarch pressed him strongly to visit him at Vaucluse, interspersing his persuasion with many compliments to King Robert of Naples, to whom he knew that Dionisio was much attached; nor was he without hopes that his friend would speak favourably of him to his Neapolitan Majesty. In a letter from Vaucluse he says:—"Can nothing induce you to come to my solitude? Will not my ardent request, and the pity you must have for my condition, bring you to pass some days with your old disciple? If these motives are not sufficient, permit me to suggest another inducement. There is in this place a poplar-tree of so immense a size that it covers with its shade not only the river and its banks, but

* Canzoni 8, 9, and 10.

also a considerable extent beyond them. They tell us that King Robert of Naples, invited by the beauty of this spot, came hither to unburthen his mind from the weight of public affairs, and to enjoy himself in the shady retreat." The poet added many eulogies on his Majesty of Naples, which, as he anticipated, reached the royal ear. It seems not to be clear that Father Dionisio ever visited the poet at Vaucluse; though they certainly had an interview at Avignon. To Petrarch's misfortune, his friend's stay in that city was very short. The monk proceeded to Florence, but he found there no shady retreat like that of the poplar at Vaucluse. Florence was more than ever agitated by internal commotions, and was this year afflicted by plague and famine. This dismal state of the city determined Dionisio to accept an invitation from King Robert to spend the remainder of his days at his court.

This monarch had the happiness of giving additional publicity to Petrarch's reputation. That the poet sought his patronage need not be concealed; and if he used a little flattery in doing so, we must make allowance for the adulatory instinct of the tuneful tribe. We cannot live without bread upon bare reputation, or on the prospect of having tombstones put over our bones, prematurely hurried to the grave by hunger, when they shall be as insensible to praise as the stones themselves. To speak seriously, I think that a poet sacrifices his usefulness to himself and others, and an importance in society which may be turned to public good, if he shuns the patronage that can be obtained by unparasitical means.

Father Dionisio, upon his arrival at Naples, impressed the King with so favourable an opinion of Petrarch that Robert wrote a letter to our poet, enclosing an epitaph of his Majesty's own composition, on the death of his niece Clementina. This letter is unhappily lost; but the answer to it is preserved, in which Petrarch tells the monarch that his epitaph rendered his niece an object rather of envy than of lamentation. "O happy Clementina!" says the poet, "after passing through a transitory life, you have attained a double immortality, one in heaven, and another on earth." He then compares the posthumous good fortune of the princess to that of Achilles, who had been immortalized by Homer. It is possible that King Robert's letter to Petrarch was so laudatory as to require a flattering answer. But this reverberated praise is rather overstrained.

Petrarch was now intent on obtaining the honour of Poet Laureate. His wishes were at length gratified, and in a manner that made the offer more flattering than the crown itself.

Whilst he still remained at Vaucluse, at nine o'clock in the morning of the 1st of September, 1340, he received a letter from the Roman Senate, pressingly inviting him to come and receive the crown of Poet Laureate at Rome. He must have little notion

of a poet's pride and vanity, who cannot imagine the flushed countenance, the dilated eyes, and the joyously-throbbing heart of Petrarch, whilst he read this letter. To be invited by the Senate of Rome to such an honour might excuse him for forgetting that Rome was not now what she had once been, and that the substantial glory of his appointment was small in comparison with the classic associations which formed its halo.

As if to keep up the fever of his joy, he received the same day, in the afternoon, at four o'clock, another letter with the same offer, from Roberto Bardi, Chancellor of the University of Paris, in which he importuned him to be crowned as Poet Laureate at Paris. When we consider the poet's veneration for Rome, we may easily anticipate that he would give the preference to that city. That he might not, however, offend his friend Roberto Bardi and the University of Paris, he despatched a messenger to Cardinal Colonna, asking his advice upon the subject, pretty well knowing that his patron's opinion would coincide with his own wishes. The Colonna advised him to be crowned at Rome.

The custom of conferring this honour had, for a long time, been obsolete. In the earliest classical ages, garlands were given as a reward to valour and genius. Virgil exhibits his conquerors adorned with them. The Romans adopted the custom from Greece, where leafy honours were bestowed on victors at public games. This coronation of poets, it is said, ceased under the reign of the Emperor Theodosius. After his death, during the long subsequent barbarism of Europe, when literature produced only rhyming monks, and when there were no more poets to crown, the discontinuance of the practice was a natural consequence.

At the commencement of the thirteenth century, according to the Abbé Resnel, the universities of Europe began to dispense laurels, not to poets, but to students distinguished by their learning. The doctors in medicine, at the famous university of Salerno, established by the Emperor Frederic II., had crowns of laurel put upon their heads. The bachelors also had their laurels, and derived their name from a baculus, or stick, which they carried.

Cardinal Colonna, as we have said, advised him, "*nothing loth*," to enjoy his coronation at Rome. Thither accordingly he repaired early in the year 1341. He embarked at Marseilles for Naples, wishing previously to his coronation to visit King Robert, by whom he was received with all possible hospitality and distinction.

Though he had accepted the laurel amidst the general applause of his contemporaries, Petrarch was not satisfied that he should enjoy this honour without passing through an ordeal as to his learning, for laurels and learning had been for one hundred years habitually associated in men's minds. The person whom Petrarch selected for his examiner in erudition was the King of Naples. Robert *the Good*, as he was in some respects deservedly called, was, for his age, a well-instructed man, and, for a king, a prodigy.

He had also some common sense, but in classical knowledge he was more fit to be the scholar of Petrarch than his examiner. If Petrarch, however, learned nothing from the King, the King learned something from Petrarch. Among the other requisites for examining a Poet Laureate which Robert possessed, was *an utter ignorance of poetry*. But Petrarch couched his blindness on the subject, so that Robert saw, or believed he saw, something useful in the divine art. He had heard of the epic poem, Africa, and requested its author to recite to him some part of it. The King was charmed with the recitation, and requested that the work might be dedicated to him. Petrarch assented, but the poem was not finished or published till after King Robert's death.

His Neapolitan Majesty, after pronouncing a warm eulogy on our poet, declared that he merited the laurel, and had letters patent drawn up, by which he certified that, after a *severe* examination (it lasted three days), Petrarch was judged worthy to receive that honour in the Capitol. Robert wished him to be crowned at Naples; but our poet represented that he was desirous of being distinguished on the same theatre where Virgil and Horace had shone. The King accorded with his wishes; and, to complete his kindness, regretted that his advanced age would not permit him to go to Rome, and crown Petrarch himself. He named, however, one of his most eminent courtiers, Barrilli, to be his proxy. Boccaccio speaks of Barrilli as a good poet; and Petrarch, with exaggerated politeness, compares him to Ovid.

When Petrarch went to take leave of King Robert, the sovereign, after engaging his promise that he would visit him again very soon, took off the robe which he wore that day, and, begging Petrarch's acceptance of it, desired that he might wear it on the day of his coronation. He also bestowed on him the place of his almoner-general, an office for which great interest was always made, on account of the privileges attached to it, the principal of which were an exemption from paying the tithes of benefices to the King, and a dispensation from residence.

Petrarch proceeded to Rome, where he arrived on the 6th of April, 1341, accompanied by only one attendant from the court of Naples, for Barrilli had taken another route, upon some important business, promising, however, to be at Rome before the time appointed. But as he had not arrived on the 7th, Petrarch despatched a messenger in search of him, who returned without any information. The poet was desirous to wait for his arrival; but Orso, Count of Anguillara, would not suffer the ceremony to be deferred. Orso was joint senator of Rome with Giordano degli Orsini; and, his office expiring on the 8th of April, he was unwilling to resign to his successor the pleasure of crowning so great a man.

Petrarch was afterwards informed that Barrilli, hastening towards Rome, had been beset near Anaguia by robbers, from whom

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he escaped with difficulty, and that he was obliged for safety to return to Naples. In leaving that city, Petrarch passed the tomb traditionally said to be that of Virgil. His coronation took place without delay after his arrival at Rome.

The morning of the 8th of April, 1341, was ushered in by the sound of trumpets; and the people, ever fond of a show, came from all quarters to see the ceremony. Twelve youths selected from the best families of Rome, and clothed in scarlet, opened the procession, repeating as they went some verses, composed by the poet, in honour of the Roman people. They were followed by six citizens of Rome, clothed in green, and bearing crowns wreathed with different flowers. Petrarch walked in the midst of them; after him came the senator, accompanied by the first men of the council. The streets were strewed with flowers, and the windows filled with ladies, dressed in the most splendid manner, who showered perfumed waters profusely on the poet.* He all the time wore the robe that had been presented to him by the King of Naples. When they reached the Capitol, the trumpets were silent, and Petrarch, having made a short speech, in which he quoted a verse from Virgil, cried out three times, "Long live the Roman people! long live the Senators! may God preserve their liberty!" At the conclusion of these words, he knelt before the senator Orso, who, taking a crown of laurel from his own head, placed it on that of Petrarch, saying, "This crown is the reward of virtue." The poet then repeated a sonnet in praise of the ancient Romans. The people testified their approbation by shouts of applause, crying, "Long flourish the Capitol and the poet!" The friends of Petrarch shed tears of joy, and Stefano Colonna, his favourite hero, addressed the assembly in his honour.

The ceremony having been finished at the Capitol, the procession, amidst the sound of trumpets and the acclamations of the people, repaired thence to the church of St. Peter, where Petrarch offered up his crown of laurel before the altar. The same day the Count of Anguillara caused letters patent to be delivered to Petrarch, in which the senators, after a flattering preamble, declared that he had merited the title of a great poet and historian; that, to mark his distinction, they had put upon his head a laurel crown, not only by the authority of King Robert, but by that of the Roman Senate and people; and that they gave him, at Rome and elsewhere, the privilege to read, to dispute, to explain ancient books, to make new ones, to compose poems, and to wear a crown according to his choice, either of laurel, beech, or myrtle, as well

* Valery, in his "Travels in Italy," gives the following note respecting our poet. I quote from the edition of the work published at Brussels in 1835:—"Petrarque rapporte dans ses lettres latines que le laurier du Capitole lui avait attiré une multitude d'envieux; que, le jour de son couronnement, au lieu d'eau odorante qu'il était d'usage de répandre dans ces solennités, il reçut sur la tête une eau corrosive, qui le rendit chauve le reste de sa vie. Son historien Dolce raconte même qu'une vieille lui jetta son pot de chambre rempli d'une acre urine, gardée, peut-être, pour cela depuis sept semaines."

as the poetic habit. At that time a particular dress was affected by the poets. Dante was buried in this costume.

Petrarch continued only a few days at Rome after his coronation; but he had scarcely departed when he found that there were banditti on the road waiting for him, and anxious to relieve him of any superfluous wealth which he might have about him. He was thus obliged to return to Rome with all expedition; but he set out the following day, attended by a guard of armed men, and arrived at Pisa on the 20th of April.

From Pisa he went to Parma, to see his friend Azzo Correggio, and soon after his arrival he was witness to a revolution in that city of which Azzo had the principal direction. The Scalas, who held the sovereignty of Parma, had for some time oppressed the inhabitants with exorbitant taxes, which excited murmurs and seditions. The Correggios, to whom the city was entrusted in the absence of Mastino della Scala, profited by the public discontent, hoisted the flag of liberty, and, on the 22nd of May, 1341, drove out the garrison, and made themselves lords of the commonwealth. On this occasion, Azzo has been accused of the worst ingratitude to his nephews, Alberto and Mastino. But, if the people were oppressed, he was surely justified in rescuing them from misgovernment. To a great degree, also, the conduct of the Correggios sanctioned the revolution. They introduced into Parma such a mild and equitable administration as the city had never before experienced. Some exceptionable acts they undoubtedly committed; and when Petrarch extols Azzo as another Cato, it is to be hoped that he did so with some mental reservation. Petrarch had proposed to cross the Alps immediately, and proceed to Avignon; but he was prevailed upon by the solicitations of Azzo to remain some time at Parma. He was consulted by the Correggios on their most important affairs, and was admitted to their secret councils. In the present instance, this confidence was peculiarly agreeable to him; as the four brothers were, at that time, unanimous in their opinions; and their designs were all calculated to promote the welfare of their subjects.

Soon after his arrival at Parma, he received one of those tokens of his popularity which are exceedingly expressive, though they come from a humble admirer. A blind old man, who had been a grammar-school master at Pontremoli, came to Parma, in order to pay his devotions to the laureate. The poor man had already walked to Naples, guided in his blindness by his only son, for the purpose of finding Petrarch. The poet had left that city; but King Robert, pleased with his enthusiasm, made him a present of some money. The aged pilgrim returned to Pontremoli, where, being informed that Petrarch was at Parma, he crossed the Apennines, in spite of the severity of the weather, and travelled thither, having sent before him a tolerable copy of verses. He was presented to Petrarch, whose hand he kissed with devotion and

exclamations of joy. One day, before many spectators, the blind man said to Petrarch, "Sir, I have come far to see you." The bystanders laughed, on which the old man replied, "I appeal to you, Petrarch, whether I do not see you more clearly and distinctly than these men who have their eyesight." Petrarch gave him a kind reception, and dismissed him with a considerable present.

The pleasure which Petrarch had in retirement, reading, and reflection, induced him to hire a house on the outskirts of the city of Parma, with a garden, beautifully watered by a stream, a *rus in urbe*, as he calls it; and he was so pleased with this locality, that he purchased and embellished it.

His happiness, however, he tells us, was here embittered by the loss of some friends who shared the first place in his affections. One of these was Tommaso da Messina, with whom he had formed a friendship when they were fellow-students at Bologna, and ever since kept up a familiar correspondence. They were of the same age, addicted to the same pursuits, and imbued with similar sentiments. Tommaso wrote a volume of Latin poems, several of which were published after the invention of printing. Petrarch, in his Triumphs of Love, reckons him an excellent poet.

This loss was followed by another which affected Petrarch still more strongly. Having received frequent invitations to Lombes from the Bishop, who had resided some time in his diocese, Petrarch looked forward with pleasure to the time when he should revisit him. But he received accounts that the Bishop was taken dangerously ill. Whilst his mind was agitated by this news, he had the following dream, which he has himself related. "Methought I saw the Bishop crossing the rivulet of my garden alone. I was astonished at this meeting, and asked him whence he came, whither he was going in such haste, and why he was alone. He smiled upon me with his usual complacency, and said, 'Remember that when you were in Gascony the tempestuous climate was insupportable to you. I also am tired of it. I have quitted Gascony, never to return, and I am going to Rome.' At the conclusion of these words, he had reached the end of the garden, and, as I endeavoured to accompany him, he in the kindest and gentlest manner waved his hand; but, upon my persevering, he cried out in a more peremptory manner, 'Stay! you must not at present attend me.' Whilst he spoke these words, I fixed my eyes upon him, and saw the paleness of death upon his countenance. Seized with horror, I uttered a loud cry, which awoke me. I took notice of the time. I told the circumstance to all my friends; and, at the expiration of five-and-twenty days, I received accounts of his death, which happened in the very same night in which he had appeared to me."

On a little reflection, this incident will not appear to be supernatural. That Petrarch, oppressed as he was with anxiety about

his friend, should fall into fanciful reveries during his sleep, and imagine that he saw him in the paleness of death, was nothing wonderful—nay, that he should frame this allegory in his dream is equally conceivable. The sleeper's imagination is often a great improvisatore. It forms scenes and stories; its puts questions, and answers them itself, all the time believing that the responses come from those whom it interrogates.

Petrarch, deeply attached to Azzo da Correggio, now began to consider himself as settled at Parma, where he enjoyed literary retirement in the bosom of his beloved Italy. But he had not resided there a year, when he was summoned to Avignon by orders he considered that he could not disobey. Tiraboschi, and after him Baldelli, ascribe his return to Avignon to the commission which he received in 1342, to go as advocate of the Roman people to the new Pope, Clement VI., who had succeeded to the tiara on the death of Benedict XII., and Petrarch's own words coincide with what they say. The feelings of joy with which Petrarch revisited Avignon, though to appearance he had weaned himself from Laura, may be imagined. He had friendship, however, if he had not love, to welcome him. Here he met, with reciprocal gladness, his friends Socrates and Lælius, who had established themselves at the court of the Cardinal Colonna. "Socrates," says De Sade, "devoted himself entirely to Petrarch, and even went with him to Vaucluse." It thus appears that Petrarch had not given up his peculium on the Sorgue, nor had any one rented the field and cottage in his absence.

Benedict's successor, Clement VI., was conversant with the world, and accustomed to the splendour of courts. Quite a contrast to the plain rigidity of Benedict, he was courteous and munificent, but withal a voluptuary; and his luxury and profusion gave rise to extortions, to rapine, and to boundless simony. His artful and arrogant mistress, the Countess of Turenne, ruled him so absolutely, that all places in his gift, which had escaped the grasp of his relations, were disposed of through her interest; and she amassed great wealth by the sale of benefices.

The Romans applied to Clement VI., as they had applied to Benedict XII., imploring him to bring back the sacred seat to their capital; and they selected Petrarch to be among those who should present their supplication. Our poet appealed to his Holiness on this subject, both in prose and verse. The Pope received him with smiles, complimented him on his eloquence, bestowed on him the priory of Migliorino, but, for the present, consigned his remonstrance to oblivion.

In this mission to Clement at Avignon there was joined with Petrarch the famous Nicola Gabrino, better known by the name Cola di Rienzo, who, very soon afterwards, attached the history of Rome to his biography. He was for the present comparatively

little known; but Petrarch, thus coming into connection with this extraordinary person, was captivated with his eloquence, whilst Clement complimented Rienzo, admitted him daily to his presence, and conversed with him on the wretched state of Rome, the tyranny of the nobles, and the sufferings of the people.

Cola and Petrarch were the two chiefs of this Roman embassy to the Pope; and it appears that the poet gave precedency to the future tribune on this occasion. They both elaborately exposed the three demands of the Roman people, namely, that the Pope, already the acknowledged patron of Rome, should assume the title and functions of its senator, in order to extinguish the civil wars kindled by the Roman barons; that he should return to his pontifical chair on the banks of the Tiber; and that he should grant permission for the jubilee, instituted by Boniface VIII., to be held every fifty years, and not at the end of a century, as its extension to the latter period went far beyond the ordinary duration of human life, and cut off the greater part of the faithful from enjoying the institution.

Clement praised both orators, and conceded that the Romans should have a jubilee every fifty years; but he excused himself from going to Rome, alleging that he was prevented by the disputes between France and England. "Holy Father," said Petrarch, "how much it were to be wished that you had known Italy before you knew France." "I wish I had," said the Pontiff, very coldly.

Petrarch gave vent to his indignation at the papal court in a writing, entitled, "A Book of Letters without a Title," and in several severe sonnets. The "Liber Epistolarum sine Titulo" contains, as it is printed in his works (Basle edit., 1581), eighteen letters, fulminating as freely against papal luxury and corruption as if they had been penned by Luther or John Knox. From their contents, we might set down Petrarch as the earliest preacher of the Reformation, if there were not, in the writings of Dante, some passages of the same stamp. If these epistles were really circulated at the time when they were written, it is matter of astonishment that Petrarch never suffered from any other flames than those of love; for many honest reformers, who have been roasted alive, have uttered less anti-papal vituperation than our poet; nor, although Petrarch would have been startled at a revolution in the hierarchy, can it be doubted that his writings contributed to the Reformation.

It must be remembered, at the same time, that he wrote against the church government of Avignon, and not that of Rome. He compares Avignon with the Assyrian Babylon, with Egypt under the mad tyranny of Cambyses; or rather, denies that the latter empires can be held as parallels of guilt to the western Babylon; nay, he tells us that neither Avernus nor Tartarus can be confronted with this infernal place.

"The successors of a troop of fishermen," he says, "have forgotten their origin. They are not contented, like the first followers of Christ, who gained their livelihood by the Lake of Gennesareth, with modest habitations, but they must build themselves splendid palaces, and go about covered with gold and purple. They are fishers of men, who catch a credulous multitude, and devour them for their prey." This "Liber Epistolarum" includes some descriptions of the debaucheries of the churchmen, which are too scandalous for translation. They are nevertheless curious relics of history.

In this year, Gherardo, the brother of our poet, retired, by his advice, to the Carthusian monastery of Montrieux, which they had both visited in the pilgrimage to Baume three years before. Gherardo had been struck down with affliction by the death of a beautiful woman at Avignon, to whom he was devoted. Her name and history are quite unknown, but it may be hoped, if not conjectured, that she was not married, and could be more liberal in her affections than the poet's Laura.

Amidst all the incidents of this period of his life, the attachment of Petrarch to Laura continued unabated. It appears, too, that, since his return from Parma, she treated him with more than wonted complacency. He passed the greater part of the year 1342 at Avignon, and went to Vaucluse but seldom and for short intervals.

In the meantime, love, that makes other people idle, interfered not with Petrarch's fondness for study. He found an opportunity of commencing the study of Greek, and seized it with avidity. That language had never been totally extinct in Italy; but at the time on which we are touching, there were not probably six persons in the whole country acquainted with it. Dante had quoted Greek authors, but without having known the Greek alphabet. The person who favoured Petrarch with this coveted instruction was Bernardo Barlaamo, a Calabrian monk, who had been three years before at Avignon, having come as envoy from Andronicus, the eastern Emperor, on pretext of proposing a union between the Greek and Roman churches, but, in reality for the purpose of trying to borrow money from the Pope for the Emperor. Some of Petrarch's biographers date his commencement of the study of Greek from the period of Barlaamo's first visit to Avignon; but I am inclined to postpone it to 1342, when Barlaamo returned to the west and settled at Avignon. Petrarch began studying Greek by the reading of Plato. He never obtained instruction sufficient to make him a good Grecian, but he imbibed much of the spirit of Plato from the labour which he bestowed on his works. He was very anxious to continue his Greek readings with Barlaamo; but his stay in Avignon was very short; and, though it was his interest to detain him as his preceptor, Petrarch, finding that he was anxious for a settlement

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in Italy, helped him to obtain the bishopric of Geraci, in Calabria.

The next year was memorable in our poet's life for the birth of his daughter Francesca. That the mother of this daughter was the same who presented him with his son John there can be no doubt. Baldelli discovers, in one of Petrarch's letters, an obscure allusion to her, which seems to indicate that she died suddenly after the birth of Francesca, who proved a comfort to her father in his old age.

The opening of the year 1343 brought a new loss to Petrarch in the death of Robert, King of Naples. Petrarch, as we have seen, had occasion to be grateful to this monarch; and we need not doubt that he was much affected by the news of his death; but, when we are told that he repaired to Vaucluse to bewail his irreparable loss, we may suppose, without uncharitableness, that he retired also with a view to study the expression of his grief no less than to cherish it. He wrote, however, an interesting letter on the occasion to Barbato di Sulmona, in which he very sensibly exhibits his fears of the calamities which were likely to result from the death of Robert, adding that his mind was seldom true in prophecy, unless when it foreboded misfortunes; and his predictions on this occasion were but too well verified.

Robert was succeeded by his granddaughter Giovanna, a girl of sixteen, already married to Andrew of Hungary, her cousin, who was but a few months older. Robert by his will had established a council of regency, which was to continue until Giovanna arrived at the age of twenty-five. The Pope, however, made objections to this arrangement, alleging that the administration of affairs during the Queen's minority devolved upon him immediately as lord superior. But, as he did not choose to assert his right till he should receive more accurate information respecting the state of the kingdom, he gave Petrarch a commission for that purpose; and entrusted him with a negotiation of much importance and delicacy.

Petrarch received an additional commission from the Cardinal Colonna. Several friends of the Colonna family were, at that time, confined in prison at Naples, and the Cardinal flattered himself that Petrarch's eloquence and intercession would obtain their enlargement. Our poet accepted the embassy. He went to Nice, where he embarked; but had nearly been lost in his passage. He wrote to Cardinal Colonna the following account of his voyage.

"I embarked at Nice, the first maritime town in Italy (he means the nearest to France). At night I got to Monaco, and the bad weather obliged me to pass a whole day there, which by no means put me into good-humour. The next morning we re-embarked, and, after being tossed all day by the tempest, we arrived very late at Port Maurice. The night was dreadful; it

was impossible to get to the castle, and I was obliged to put up at a little village, where my bed and supper appeared tolerable from extreme weariness. I determined to proceed by land; the perils of the road appeared less dreadful to me than those by sea. I left my servants and baggage in the ship, which set sail, and I remained with only one domestic on shore. By accident, upon the coast of Genoa, I found some German horses which were for sale; they were strong and serviceable. I bought them; but I was soon afterwards obliged to take ship again; for war was renewed between the Pisans and the Milanese. Nature has placed limits to these States, the Po on one side, and the Apennines on the other. I must have passed between their two armies if I had gone by land; this obliged me to re-embark at Lerici. I passed by Corvo, that famous rock, the ruins of the city of Luna, and landed at Murrona. Thence I went the next day on horseback to Pisa, Siena, and Rome. My eagerness to execute your orders has made me a night-traveller, contrary to my character and disposition. I would not sleep till I had paid my duty to your illustrious father, who is always my hero. I found him the same as I left him seven years ago, nay, even as hale and sprightly as when I saw him at Avignon, which is now twelve years. What a surprising man! What strength of mind and body! How firm his voice! How beautiful his face! Had he been a few years younger, I should have taken him for Julius Cæsar, or Scipio Africanus. Rome grows old; but not its hero. He was half undressed, and going to bed: so I stayed only a moment, but I passed the whole of the next day with him. He asked me a thousand questions about you, and was much pleased that I was going to Naples. When I set out from Rome, he insisted on accompanying me beyond the walls.

"I reached Palestrina that night, and was kindly received by your nephew John. He is a young man of great hopes, and follows the steps of his ancestors.

"I arrived at Naples the 11th of October. Heavens, what a change has the death of one man produced in that place! No one would know it now. Religion, Justice, and Truth are banished. I think I am at Memphis, Babylon, or Mecca. In the stead of a king so just and so pious, a little monk, fat, rosy, barefooted, with a shorn head, and half covered with a dirty mantle, bent by hypocrisy more than by age, lost in debauchery whilst proud of his affected poverty, and still more of the real wealth he has amassed—this man holds the reins of this staggering empire. In vice and cruelty he rivals a Dionysius, an Agathocles, or a Phalaris. This monk, named Roberto, was an Hungarian cordelier, and preceptor of Prince Andrew, whom he entirely sways. He oppresses the weak, despises the great, tramples justice under foot, and treats both the dowager and the reigning Queen with the greatest insolence. The court and city tremble

before him; a mournful silence reigns in the public assemblies, and in private they converse by whispers. The least gesture is punished, and *to think* is denounced as a crime. To this man I have presented the orders of the Sovereign Pontiff, and your just demands. He behaved with incredible insolence. Susa, or Damascus, the capital of the Saracens, would have received with more respect an envoy from the Holy See. The great lords imitate his pride and tyranny. The Bishop of Cavaillon is the only one who opposes this torrent; but what can one lamb do in the midst of so many wolves? It is the request of a dying king alone that makes him endure so wretched a situation. How small are the hopes of my negotiation! but I shall wait with patience; though I know beforehand the answer they will give me."

It is plain from Petrarch's letter that the kingdom of Naples was now under a miserable subjection to the Hungarian faction, and that the young Queen's situation was anything but enviable. Few characters in modern history have been drawn in such contrasted colours as that of Giovanna, Queen of Naples. She has been charged with every vice, and extolled for every virtue. Petrarch represents her as a woman of weak understanding, disposed to gallantry, but incapable of greater crimes. Her history reminds us much of that of Mary Queen of Scots. Her youth and her character, gentle and interesting in several respects, entitle her to the benefit of our doubts as to her assent to the death of Andrew. Many circumstances seem to me to favour those doubts, and the opinion of Petrarch is on the side of her acquittal.

On his arrival in Naples, Petrarch had an audience with the Queen Dowager; but her grief and tears for the loss of her husband made this interview brief and fruitless with regard to business. When he spoke to her about the prisoners, for whose release the Colonnas had desired him to intercede, her Majesty referred him to the council. She was now, in reality, only a state cypher.

The principal prisoners for whom Petrarch was commissioned to plead, were the Counts Minervino, di Lucera, and Pontenza. Petrarch applied to the council of state in their behalf, but he was put off with perpetual excuses. While the affair was in agitation he went to Capua, where the prisoners were confined. "There," he writes to the Cardinal Colonna, "I saw your friends; and, such is the instability of Fortune, that I found them in chains. They support their situation with fortitude. Their innocence is no plea in their behalf to those who have shared in the spoils of their fortune. Their only expectations rest upon you. I have no hopes, except from the intervention of some superior power, as any dependence on the clemency of the council is out of the question. The Queen Dowager, now the

most desolate of widows, compassionates their case, but cannot assist them."

Petrarch, wearied with the delays of business, sought relief in excursions to the neighbourhood. Of these he writes an account to Cardinal Colonna.

"I went to Baiæ," he says, "with my friends, Barbato and Barrilli. Everything concurred to render this jaunt agreeable—good company, the beauty of the scenes, and my extreme weariness of the city I had quitted. This climate, which, as far as I can judge, must be insupportable in summer, is delightful in winter. I was rejoiced to behold places described by Virgil, and, what is more surprising, by Homer before him. I have seen the Lucrine lake, famous for its fine oysters; the lake Avernus, with water as black as pitch, and fishes of the same colour swimming in it; marshes formed by the standing waters of Acheron, and the mountain whose roots go down to hell. The terrible aspect of this place, the thick shades with which it is covered by a surrounding wood, and the pestilent odour which this water exhales, characterize it very justly as the Tartarus of the poets. There wants only the boat of Charon, which, however, would be unnecessary, as there is only a shallow ford to pass over. The Styx and the kingdom of Pluto are now hid from our sight. Awed by what I had heard and read of these mournful approaches to the dead, I was contented to view them at my feet from the top of a high mountain. The labourer, the shepherd, and the sailor, dare not approach them nearer. There are deep caverns, where some pretend that a great deal of gold is concealed; covetous men, they say, have been to seek it, but they never return; whether they lost their way in the dark valleys, or had a fancy to visit the dead, being so near their habitations.

"I have seen the ruins of the grotto of the famous Cumæan sybil; it is a hideous rock, suspended in the Avernian lake. Its situation strikes the mind with horror. There still remain the hundred mouths by which the gods conveyed their oracles; these are now dumb, and there is only one God who speaks in heaven and on earth. These uninhabited ruins serve as the resort of birds of unlucky omen. Not far off is that dreadful cavern which leads, *they say*, to the infernal regions. Who would believe that, close to the mansions of the dead, Nature should have placed powerful remedies for the preservation of life? Near Avernus and Acheron are situated that barren land whence rises continually a salutary vapour, which is a cure for several diseases, and those hot-springs that vomit hot and sulphureous cinders. I have seen the baths which Nature has prepared; but the avarice of physicians has rendered them of doubtful use. This does not, however, prevent them from being visited by the invalids of all the neighbouring towns. These hollowed moun-

tains dazzle us with the lustre of their marble circles, on which are engraved figures that point out, by the position of their hands, the part of the body which each fountain is proper to cure.

"I saw the foundations of that admirable reservoir of Nero, which was to go from Mount Misenus to the Avernian lake, and to enclose all the hot waters of Baiæ.

"At Pozzuoli I saw the mountain of Falernus, celebrated for its grapes, whence the famous Falernian wine. I saw likewise those enraged waves of which Virgil speaks in his Georgics, on which Cæsar put a bridle by the mole which he raised there, and which Augustus finished. It is now called the Dead Sea. I am surprised at the prodigious expense the Romans were at to build houses in the most exposed situations, in order to shelter them from the severities of the weather; for in the heats of summer the valleys of the Apennines, the mountains of Viterbo, and the woods of Umbria, furnished them with charming shades; and even the ruins of the houses which they built in those places are superb."

Our poet's residence at Naples was evidently disagreeable to him, in spite of the company of his friends, Barrilli and Barbato. His friendship with the latter was for a moment overcast by an act of indiscretion on the part of Barbato, who, by dint of importunity, obtained from Petrarch thirty-four lines of his poem of Africa, under a promise that he would show them to nobody. On entering the library of another friend, the first thing that struck our poet's eyes was a copy of the same verses, transcribed with a good many blunders. Petrarch's vanity on this occasion, however, was touched more than his anger—he forgave his friend's treachery, believing it to have arisen from excessive admiration. Barbato, as some atonement, gave him a little MS. of Cicero, which Petrarch found to contain two books of the orator's Treatise on the Academics, "a work," as he observes, "more subtle than useful."

Queen Giovanna was fond of literature. She had several conversations with Petrarch, which increased her admiration of him. After the example of her grandfather, she made him her chaplain and household clerk, both of which offices must be supposed to have been sinecures. Her letters appointing him to them are dated the 25th of November, 1343, the very day before that nocturnal storm of which I shall speedily quote the poet's description.

Voltaire has asserted that the young Queen of Naples was the pupil of Petrarch; "but of this," as De Sade remarks, "there is no proof." It only appears that the two greatest geniuses of Italy, Boccaccio and Petrarch, were both attached to Giovanna, and had a more charitable opinion of her than most of their contemporaries.

Soon after his return from the tour to Baiæ, Petrarch was witness to a violent tempest at Naples, which most historians have mentioned, as it was memorable for having threatened the entire destruction of the city.

The night of the 25th of November, 1343, set in with uncommonly still weather; but suddenly a tempest rose violently, in the direction of the sea, which made the buildings of the city shake to their very foundations. "At the first onset of the tempest," Petrarch writes to the Cardinal Colonna, "the windows of the house were burst open. The lamp of my chamber"—he was lodged at a monastery—"was blown out—I was shaken from my bed with violence, and I apprehended immediate death. The friars and prior of the convent, who had risen to pay their customary devotions, rushed into my room with crucifixes and relics in their hands, imploring the mercy of the Deity. I took courage, and accompanied them to the church, where we all passed the night, expecting every moment to be our last. I cannot describe the horrors of that dreadful night; the bursts of lightning and the roaring of thunder were blended with the shrieks of the people. The night itself appeared protracted to an unnatural length; and, when the morning arrived, which we discovered rather by conjecture than by any dawning of light, the priests prepared to celebrate the service; but the rest of us, not having yet dared to lift up our eyes towards the heavens, threw ourselves prostrate on the ground. At length the day appeared—a day how like to night! The cries of the people began to cease in the upper part of the city, but were redoubled from the sea-shore. Despair inspired us with courage. We mounted our horses and arrived at the port. What a scene was there! the vessels had suffered shipwreck in the very harbour; the shore was covered with dead bodies, which were tossed about and dashed against the rocks, whilst many appeared struggling in the agonies of death. Meanwhile, the raging ocean overturned many houses from their very foundations. Above a thousand Neapolitan horsemen were assembled near the shore to assist, as it were, at the obsequies of their countrymen. I caught from them a spirit of resolution, and was less afraid of death from the consideration that we should all perish together. On a sudden a cry of horror was heard; the sea had sapped the foundations of the ground on which we stood, and it was already beginning to give way. We immediately hastened to a higher place, where the scene was equally impressive. The young Queen, with naked feet and dishevelled hair, attended by a number of women, was rushing to the church of the Virgin, crying out for mercy in this imminent peril. At sea, no ship escaped the fury of the tempest: all the vessels in the harbour—one only excepted—sunk before our eyes, and every soul on board perished."

By the assiduity and solicitations of Petrarch, the council of

Naples were at last engaged in debating about the liberation of Colonna's imprisoned friends; and the affair was nearly brought to a conclusion, when the approach of night obliged the members to separate before they came to a final decision. The cause of this separation is a sad proof of Neapolitan barbarism at that period. It will hardly, at this day, seem credible that, in the capital of so flourishing a kingdom, and the residence of a brilliant court, such savage licentiousness could have prevailed. At night, all the streets of the city were beset by the young nobility, who were armed, and who attacked all passengers without distinction, so that even the members of the council could not venture to appear after a certain hour. Neither the severity of parents, nor the authority of the magistrates, nor of Majesty itself, could prevent continual combats and assassinations.

"But can it be astonishing," Petrarch remarks, "that such disgraceful scenes should pass in the night, when the Neapolitans celebrate, even in the face of day, games similar to those of the gladiators, and with more than barbarian cruelty? Human blood is shed here with as little remorse as that of brute animals; and, while the people join madly in applause, sons expire in the very sight of their parents; and it is considered the utmost disgrace not to die with becoming fortitude, as if they were dying in the defence of their religion and country. I myself, ignorant of these customs, was once carried to the Carbonara, the destined place of butchery. The Queen and her husband, Andrew, were present; the soldiery of Naples were present, and the people flocked thither in crowds. I was kept in suspense by the appearance of so large and brilliant an assembly, and expected some spectacle worthy of my attention, when I suddenly heard a loud shout of applause, as for some joyous incident. What was my surprise when I beheld a beautiful young man pierced through with a sword, and ready to expire at my feet! Struck with horror, I put spurs to my horse, and fled from the barbarous sight, uttering execrations on the cruel spectators.

"This inhuman custom has been derived from their ancestors, and is now so sanctioned by inveterate habit, that their very licentiousness is dignified with the name of liberty.

"You will cease to wonder at the imprisonment of your friends in this city, where the death of a young man is considered as an innocent pastime. As to myself, I will quit this inhuman country before three days are past, and hasten to you who can make all things agreeable to me except a sea-voyage."

Petrarch at length brought his negotiations respecting the prisoners to a successful issue; and they were released by the express authority of Andrew. Our poet's presence being no longer necessary, he left Naples, in spite of the strong solicitations of his friends Barrilli and Barbato. In answer to their request that he

would remain, he said, "I am but a satellite, and follow the directions of a superior planet; quiet and repose are denied to me."

From Naples he went to Parma, where Azzo Correggio, with his wonted affection, pressed him to delay; and Petrarch accepted the invitation, though he remarked with sorrow that harmony no longer reigned among the brothers of the family. He stopped there, however, for some time, and enjoyed such tranquillity that he could revise and polish his compositions. But, in the following year, 1345, his friend Azzo, having failed to keep his promise to Luchino Visconti, as to restoring to him the lordship of Parma—Azzo had obtained it by the assistance of the Visconti, who avenged himself by making war on the Correggios—he invested Parma, and afflicted it with a tedious siege. Petrarch, foreseeing little prospect of pursuing his studies quietly in a beleaguered city, left the place with a small number of his companions; but, about midnight, near Rheggio, a troop of robbers rushed from an ambuscade, with cries of "Kill! kill!" and our handful of travellers, being no match for a host of brigands, fled and sought to save themselves under favour of night. Petrarch, during this flight, was thrown from his horse. The shock was so violent that he swooned; but he recovered, and was remounted by his companions. They had not got far, however, when a violent storm of rain and lightning rendered their situation almost as bad as that from which they had escaped, and threatened them with death in another shape. They passed a dreadful night without finding a tree or the hollow of a rock to shelter them, and had no expedient for mitigating their exposure to the storm but to turn their horses' backs to the tempest.

When the dawn permitted them to discern a path amidst the brushwood, they pushed on to Scandiano, a castle occupied by the Gonzaghi, friends of the lords of Parma, which they happily reached, and where they were kindly received. Here they learned that a troop of horse and foot had been waiting for them in ambush near Scandiano, but had been forced by the bad weather to withdraw before their arrival; thus "*the pelting of the pitiless storm*" had been to them a merciful occurrence. Petrarch made no delay here, for he was smarting under the bruises from his fall, but caused himself to be tied upon his horse, and went to repose at Modena. The next day he repaired to Bologna, where he stopped a short time for surgical assistance, and whence he sent a letter to his friend Barbato, describing his misadventure; but, unable to hold a pen himself, he was obliged to employ the hand of a stranger. He was so impatient, however, to get back to Avignon, that he took the road to it as soon as he could sit his horse. On approaching that city he says he felt a greater softness in the air, and saw with delight the flowers that adorn the

neighbouring woods. Everything seemed to announce the vicinity of Laura. It was seldom that Petrarch spoke so complacently of Avignon.

Clement VI. received Petrarch with the highest respect, offered him his choice among several vacant bishoprics, and pressed him to receive the office of pontifical secretary. He declined the proffered secretaryship. Prizing his independence above all things, excepting Laura, he remarked to his friends that the yoke of office would not sit lighter on him for being gilded.

In consequence of the dangers he had encountered, a rumour of his death had spread over a great part of Italy. The age was romantic, with a good deal of the fantastical in its romance. If the news had been true, and if he had been really dead and buried, it would be difficult to restrain a smile at the sort of honours that were paid to his memory by the less brain-gifted portion of his admirers. One of these, Antonio di Beccaria, a physician of Ferrara, when he ought to have been mourning for his own deceased patients, wrote a poetical lamentation for Petrarch's death. The poem, if it deserve such a name, is allegorical; it represents a funeral, in which the following personages parade in procession and grief for the Laureate's death. Grammar, Rhetoric, and Philosophy are introduced with their several attendants. Under the banners of Rhetoric are ranged Cicero, Geoffroy de Vinesauf, and Alain de Lisle. It would require all Cicero's eloquence to persuade us that his comrades in the procession were quite worthy of his company. The Nine Muses follow Petrarch's body; eleven poets, crowned with laurel, support the bier, and Minerva, holding the crown of Petrarch, closes the procession.

We have seen that Petrarch left Naples foreboding disastrous events to that kingdom. Among these, the assassination of Andrew, on the 18th of September, 1345, was one that fulfilled his augury. The particulars of this murder reached Petrarch on his arrival at Avignon, in a letter from his friend Barbato.

From the sonnets which Petrarch wrote, to all appearance, in 1345 and 1346, at Avignon or Vaucluse, he seems to have suffered from those fluctuations of Laura's favour that naturally arose from his own imprudence. When she treated him with affability, he grew bolder in his assiduities, and she was again obliged to be more severe. See Sonnets cviii., cix., and cxiv.

During this sojourn, though he dates some of his pleasantest letters from Vaucluse, he was projecting to return to Italy, and to establish himself there, after bidding a final adieu to Provence. When he acquainted his nominal patron, John Colonna, with his intention, the Cardinal rudely taxed him with madness and ingratitude. Petrarch frankly told the prelate that he was conscious of no ingratitude, since, after fourteen years passed in his service, he had received no provision for his future livelihood.

This quarrel with the proud churchman is, with fantastic pastoral imagery, made the subject of our poet's eighth Bucolic, entitled Divortium. I suspect that Petrarch's free language in favour of the Tribune Rienzo was not unconnected with their alienation.

Notwithstanding Petrarch's declared dislike of Avignon, there is every reason to suppose that he passed the greater part of the winter of 1346 in his western Babylon; and we find that he witnessed many interesting scenes between the conflicting cardinals, as well as the brilliant fêtes that were given to two foreign princes, whom an important affair now brought to Avignon. These were the King of Bohemia, and his son Charles, Prince of Moravia, otherwise called Charles of Luxemburg.

The Emperor Lewis of Bavaria, who had previously made several but fruitless attempts to reconcile himself with the Church, on learning the election of Clement VI., sent ambassadors with unlimited powers to effect a reconcilement; but the Pope proposed conditions so hard and humbling that the States of the German Empire peremptorily rejected them. On this, his Holiness confirmed the condemnations which he had already passed on Lewis of Bavaria, and enjoined the Electors of the empire to proceed to a new choice of the King of the Romans. "John of Luxemburg," says Villani, "would have been emperor if he had not been blind." A wish to secure the empire for his son and to further his election, brought him to the Pope at Avignon.

Prince Charles had to thank the Pontiff for being elected, but first his Holiness made him sign, on the 22nd of April, 1346, in presence of twelve cardinals and his brother William Roger, a declaration of which the following is the substance:—

"If, by the grace of God, I am elected King of the Romans, I will fulfil all the promises and confirm all the concessions of my grandfather Henry VII. and of his predecessors. I will revoke the acts made by Lewis of Bavaria. I will occupy no place, either in or out of Italy, belonging to the Church. I will not enter Rome before the day appointed for my coronation. I will depart from thence the same day with all my attendants, and I will never return without the permission of the Holy See." He might as well have declared that he would give the Pope all his power, as King of the Romans, provided he was allowed the profits; for, in reality, Charles had no other view with regard to Italy than to make money.

This concession, which contrasts so poorly with the conduct of Charles on many other occasions, excited universal indignation in Germany, and a good deal even in Italy. Petrarch exclaimed against it as mean and atrocious; for, Catholic as he was, he was not so much a churchman as to see without indignation the papal tiara exalted above the imperial crown.

In July, 1346, Charles was elected, and, in derision, was called "the Emperor of the Priests." The death of his rival, Lewis of

Bavaria, however, which happened in the next year, prevented a civil war, and Charles IV. remained peaceable possessor of the empire.

Among the fêtes that were given to Charles, a ball was held at Avignon, in a grand saloon brightly illuminated. Thither came all the beauties of the city and of Provence. The Prince, who had heard much of Laura, through her poetical fame, sought her out and saluted her in the French manner.

Petrarch went, according to his custom, to pass the term of Lent at Vaucluse. The Bishop of Cavaillon, eager to see the poet, persuaded him to visit his recluse residence, and remained with Petrarch as his guest for fifteen days, in his own castle, on the summit of rocks, that seemed more adapted for the perch of birds than the habitation of men. There is *now* scarcely a wreck of it remaining.

It would seem, however, that the Bishop's conversation made this retirement very agreeable to Petrarch; for it inspired him with the idea of writing a "Treatise on a Solitary Life." Of this work he made a sketch in a short time, but did not finish it till twenty years afterwards, when he dedicated and presented it to the Bishop of Cavaillon.

It is agreeable to meet, in Petrarch's life at the shut-up valley, with any circumstance, however trifling, that indicates a cheerful state of mind; for, independently of his loneliness, the inextinguishable passion for Laura never ceased to haunt him; and his love, strange to say, had mad, momentary hopes, which only deepened at their departure the returning gloom of despair. Petrarch never wrote more sonnets on his beloved than during the course of this year. Laura had a fair and discreet female friend at Avignon, who was also the friend of Petrarch, and interested in his attachment. The ideas which this amiable confidante entertained of harmonizing success in misplaced attachment with honour and virtue must have been Platonic, even beyond the feelings which Petrarch, in reality, cherished; for, occasionally, the poet's sonnets are too honest for pure Platonism. This lady, however, whose name is unknown, strove to convince Laura that she ought to treat her lover with less severity. "She pushed Laura forward," says De Sade, "and kept back Petrarch." One day she recounted to the poet all the proofs of affection, and after these proofs she said, "You infidel, can you doubt that she loves you?" It is to this fair friend that he is supposed to have addressed his nineteenth sonnet.

This year, his Laura was seized with a defluxion in her eyes, which made her suffer much, and even threatened her with blindness. This was enough to bring a sonnet from Petrarch (his 94th), in which he laments that those eyes which were the sun of his life should be for ever eclipsed. He went to see her during her illness, having now the privilege of visiting her at her own house,

and one day he found her perfectly recovered. Whether the ophthalmia was infectious, or only endemic, I know not; but so it was, that. whilst Laura's eyes got well, those of her lover became affected with the same defluxion. It struck his imagination, or, at least, he feigned to believe poetically, that the malady of her eyes had passed into his; and, in one of his sonnets, he exults at this welcome circumstance.* "I fixed my eyes," he said, "on Laura; and that moment a something inexpressible, like a shooting star, darted from them to mine. This is a present from love, in which I rejoice. How delightful it is thus to cure the darling object of one's soul!"

Petrarch received some show of complacency from Laura, which his imagination magnified; and it was some sort of consolation, at least, that his idol was courteous to him; but even this scanty solace was interrupted. Some malicious person communicated to Laura that Petrarch was imposing upon her, and that he was secretly addressing his love and his poetry to another lady under a borrowed name. Laura gave ear to the calumny, and, for a time, debarred him from her presence. If she had been wholly indifferent to him, this misunderstanding would have never existed; for jealousy and indifference are a contradiction in terms. I mean true jealousy. There is a pseudo species of it, with which many wives are troubled who care nothing about their husbands' affection; a plant of ill nature that is reared merely to be a rod of conjugal castigation. Laura, however, discovered at last, that her admirer was playing no double part. She was too reasonable to protract so unjust a quarrel, and received him again as usual.

I have already mentioned that Clement VI. had made Petrarch Canon of Modena, which benefice he resigned in favour of his friend, Luca Christino, and that this year his Holiness had also conferred upon him the prebend of Parma. This preferment excited the envy of some persons, who endeavoured to prejudice Ugolino de' Rossi, the bishop of the diocese, against him. Ugolino was of that family which had disputed for the sovereignty of Parma with the Correggios, and against whom Petrarch had pleaded in favour of their rivals. From this circumstance it was feared that Ugolino might be inclined to listen to those maligners who accused Petrarch of having gone to Avignon for the purpose of undermining the Bishop in the Pope's favour. Petrarch, upon his promotion, wrote a letter to Ugolino, strongly repelling this accusation. This is one of the manliest epistles that ever issued from his pen. "Allow me to assure you," he says, "that I would not exchange my tranquillity for your troubles, nor my poverty for your riches. Do not imagine, however, that I despise your particular situation. I only mean that there is no person of your rank whose preferment I desire; nor would I accept such prefer-

* Sonnet cxevi.

ment if it were offered to me. I should not say thus much, if my familiar intercourse with the Pope and the Cardinals had not convinced me that happiness in that rank is more a shadow than a substance. It was a memorable saying of Pope Adrian IV., 'that he knew no one more unhappy than the Sovereign Pontiff; his throne is a seat of thorns; his mantle is an oppressive weight; his tiara shines splendidly indeed, but it is not without a devouring fire.' If I had been ambitious," continues Petrarch, "I might have been preferred to a benefice of more value than yours;" and he refers to the fact of the Pope having given him his choice of several high preferments.

Petrarch passed the winter of 1346-47 chiefly at Avignon, and made but few and short excursions to Vaucluse. In one of these, at the beginning of 1347, when he had Socrates to keep him company at Vaucluse, the Bishop of Cavaillon invited them to his castle. Petrarch returned the following answer:—

"Yesterday we quitted the city of storms to take refuge in this harbour, and taste the sweets of repose. We have nothing but coarse clothes, suitable to the season and the place we live in; but in this rustic dress we will repair to see you, since you command us; we fear not to present ourselves in this rustic dress; our desire to see you puts down every other consideration. What matters it to us how we appear before one who possesses the depth of our hearts? If you wish to see us often you will treat us without ceremony."

His visits to Vaucluse were rather infrequent; business, he says, detained him often at Avignon, in spite of himself; but still at intervals he passed a day or two to look after his gardens and trees. On one of these occasions, he wrote a pleasing letter to William of Pastrengo, dilating on the pleasures of his garden, which displays liveliness and warmth of heart.

Petrarch had not seen his brother since the latter had taken the cowl in the Carthusian monastery, some five years before. To that convent he paid a visit in February, 1347, and he was received like an angel from heaven. He was delighted to see a brother whom he loved so much, and to find him contented with the life which he had embraced. The Carthusians, who had heard of Petrarch, renowned as the finest spirit of the age, were flattered by his showing a strong interest in their condition; and though he passed but a day and a night with them, they parted so mutually well pleased, that he promised, on taking leave, to send them a treatise on the happiness of the life which they led. And he kept his word; for, immediately upon his return to Vaucluse, he commenced his essay "*De Otio Religioso*—On the Leisure of the Religious," and he finished it in a few weeks. The object of this work is to show the sweets and advantages of their retired state, compared with the agitations of life in the world.

From these monkish reveries Petrarch was awakened by an

astounding public event, namely, the elevation of Cola di Rienzo to the tribuneship of Rome. At the news of this revolution, Petrarch was animated with as much enthusiasm as if he had been himself engaged in the enterprise. Under the first impulse of his feelings, he sent an epistolary congratulation and advice to Rienzo and the Roman people. This letter breathes a strongly republican spirit. In later times, we perceive that Petrarch would have been glad to witness the accomplishment of his darling object—Rome restored to her ancient power and magnificence, even under an imperial government. Our poet received from the Tribune an answer to his epistolary oration, telling him that it had been read to the Roman people, and received with applause. A considerable number of letters passed between Petrarch and Cola.

When we look back on the long connection of Petrarch with the Colonna family, his acknowledged obligations, and the attachment to them which he expresses, it may seem, at first sight, surprising that he should have so loudly applauded a revolution which struck at the roots of their power. But, if we view the matter with a more considerate eye, we shall hold the poet in nobler and dearer estimation for his public zeal than if he had cringed to the Colonnas. His personal attachment to *them*, who were quite as much honoured by *his* friendship as *he* was by *theirs*, was a consideration subservient to that of the honour of his country and the freedom of his fellow-citizens; "for," as he says in his own defence, "we owe much to our friends, still more to our parents, but everything to our country."

Retiring during this year for some time to Vaucluse, Petrarch composed an eclogue in honour of the Roman revolution, the fifth in his Bucolics. It is entitled "La Pietà Pastorale," and has three speakers, who converse about their venerable mother Rome, but in so dull a manner, that, if Petrarch had never written better poetry, we should not, probably, at this moment, have heard of his existence.

In the midst of all this political fervour, the poet's devotion to Laura continued unabated; Petrarch never composed so many sonnets in one year as during 1347, but, for the most part, still indicative of sadness and despair. In his 116th sonnet, he says:—

> "Solco onde, e 'n rena fondo, e scrivo in vento."
> I plough in water, build on sand, and write on air.

If anything were wanting to convince us that Laura had treated him, during his twenty years' courtship, with sufficient rigour, this and other such expressions would suffice to prove it. A lover, at the end of so long a period, is not apt to speak thus despondingly of a mistress who has been kind to him.

It seems, however, that there were exceptions to her extreme reserve. On one occasion, this year, when they met, and when

Petrarch's eyes were fixed on her in silent reverie, she stretched out her hand to him, and allowed him to detain it in his for some time. This incident is alluded to in his 218th sonnet.

If public events, however, were not enough to make him forget his passion for Laura, they were sufficiently stirring to keep his interest in them alive. The head of Rienzo was not strong enough to stand the elevation which he had attained. Petrarch had hitherto regarded the reports of Rienzo's errors as highly exaggerated by his enemies; but the truth of them, at last, became too palpable; though our poet's charitable opinion of the Tribune considerably outlasted that of the public at large.

When the papal court heard of the multiplied extravagances of Rienzo, they recovered a little from the panic which had seized them. They saw that they had to deal with a man whose head was turned. His summonses had enraged them; and they resolved to keep no measures with him. Towards the end of August, 1347, one of his couriers arrived without arms, and with only the symbol of his office, the silver rod, in his hand. He was arrested near Avignon; his letters were taken from him and torn to pieces; and, without being permitted to enter Avignon, he was sent back to Rome with threats and ignominy. This proceeding appeared atrocious in the eyes of Petrarch, and he wrote a letter to Rienzo on the subject, expressing his strongest indignation at the act of outrage.

Petrarch passed almost the whole of the month of September, 1347, at Avignon. On the 9th of this month he obtained letters of legitimation for his son John, who might now be about ten years old. John is entitled, in these letters, "a scholar of Florence." The Pope empowers him to possess any kind of benefice without being obliged, in future, to make mention of his illegitimate birth, or of the obtained dispensation. It appears from these letters that the mother of John was not married. He left his son at Verona under the tuition of Rinaldo di Villa Franca. Before he had left Provence in this year, for the purpose of visiting Italy, he had announced his intention to the Pope, who wished to retain him as an honour to his court, and offered him his choice of several church preferments. But our poet, whose only wish was to obtain some moderate benefice that would leave him independent and at liberty, declined his Holiness's *vague* offers. If we consider that Petrarch made no secret of his good wishes for Rienzo, it may seem surprisingly creditable to the Pontiff's liberality that he should have even *professed* any interest in the poet's fortune; but in a letter to his friend Socrates, Petrarch gives us to understand that he thought the Pope's professions were merely verbal. He says: "To hold out treasures to a man who demands a small sum is but a polite mode of refusal." In fact, the Pope offered him *some* bishopric.

knowing that he wanted only *some* benefice that should be a sinecure.

If it be asked what determined him now to leave Avignon, the counter-question may be put, what detained him so long from Italy? It appears that he had never parted with his house and garden at Parma; he hated everything in Avignon excepting Laura; and of the solitude of Vaucluse he was, in all probability, already weary.

Before he left Avignon, he went to take leave of Laura. He found her at an assembly which she often frequented. "She was seated," he says, "among those ladies who are generally her companions, and appeared like a beautiful rose surrounded with flowers smaller and less blooming." Her air was more touching than usual. She was dressed perfectly plain, and without pearls or garlands, or any gay colour. Though she was not melancholy, she did not appear to have her wonted cheerfulness, but was serious and thoughtful. She did not sing, as usual, nor speak with that voice which used to charm every one. She had the air of a person who fears an evil not yet arrived. "In taking leave of her," says Petrarch, "I sought in her looks for a consolation of my own sufferings. Her eyes had an expression which I had never seen in them before. What I saw in her face seemed to predict the sorrows that threatened me."

This was the last meeting that Petrarch and Laura ever had.

Petrarch set out for Italy, towards the close of 1347, having determined to make that country his residence for the rest of his life.

Upon his arrival at Genoa he wrote to Rienzo, reproaching him for his follies, and exhorting him to return to his former manly conduct. This advice, it is scarcely necessary to say, was like dew and sunshine bestowed upon barren sands.

From Genoa he proceeded to Parma, where he received the first information of the catastrophe of the Colonna family, six of whom had fallen in battle with Rienzo's forces. He showed himself deeply affected by it, and, probably, was so sincerely. But the Colonnas, though his former patrons, were still the enemies of a cause which he considered sacred, much as it was mismanaged and disgraced by the Tribune; and his grief cannot be supposed to have been immoderate. Accordingly, the letter which he wrote to Cardinal Colonna on this occasion is quite in the style of Seneca, and more like an ethical treatise than an epistle of condolence.

It is obvious that Petrarch slowly and reluctantly parted with his good opinion of Rienzo. But, whatever sentiments he might have cherished respecting him, he was now doomed to hear of his tragic fall.

The revolution which overthrew the Tribune was accomplished on the 15th of December, 1347. That his fall was, in a

W. H. Smyth.

COAST OF GENOA.

considerable degree, owing to his faults, is undeniable; and to the most contemptible of all faults—personal vanity. How hard it is on the great mass of mankind, that this meanness is so seldom disjoined from the zeal of popular championship! New power, like new wine, seems to intoxicate the strongest heads. How disgusting it is to see the restorer of Roman liberty dazzled like a child by a scarlet robe and its golden trimming! Nevertheless, with all his vanity, Rienzo was a better friend to the republic than those who dethroned him. The Romans would have been wise to have supported Rienzo, taking even his foibles into the account. They re-admitted their oligarchs; and, if they repented of it, as they did, they are scarcely entitled to our commiseration.

Petrarch had set out late in 1347 to visit Italy for the fifth time. He arrived at Genoa towards the end of November, 1347, on his way to Florence, where he was eagerly expected by his friends. They had obtained from the Government permission for his return; and he was absolved from the sentence of banishment in which he had been included with his father. But, whether Petrarch was offended with the Florentines for refusing to restore his paternal estate, or whether he was detained by accident in Lombardy, he put off his expedition to Florence and repaired to Parma. It was there that he learned the certainty of the Tribune's fall.

From Parma he went to Verona, where he arrived on the evening of the 25th of January, 1348. His son, we have already mentioned, was placed at Verona, under the tuition of Rinaldo di Villa Franca. Here, soon after his arrival, as he was sitting among his books, Petrarch felt the shock of a tremendous earthquake. It seemed as if the whole city was to be overturned from its foundations. He rushed immediately into the streets, where the inhabitants were gathered together in consternation; and, whilst terror was depicted in every countenance, there was a general cry that the end of the world was come. All contemporary historians mention this earthquake, and agree that it originated at the foot of the Alps. It made sad ravages at Pisa, Bologna, Padua, and Venice, and still more in the Frioul and Bavaria. If we may trust the narrators of this event, sixty villages in one canton were buried under two mountains that fell and filled up a valley five leagues in length. A whole castle, it is added, was exploded out of the earth from its foundation, and its ruins scattered many miles from the spot. The latter anecdote has undoubtedly an air of the marvellous; and yet the convulsions of nature have produced equally strange effects. Stones have been thrown out of Mount Ætna to the distance of eighteen miles.

The earthquake was the forerunner of awful calamities; and it is possible that it might be physically connected with that memo-

rable plague in 1348, which reached, in succession, all parts of the known world, and thinned the population of every country which it visited. Historians generally agree that this great plague began in China and Tartary, whence, in the space of a year, it spread its desolation over the whole of Asia. It extended itself over Italy early in 1348; but its severest ravages had not yet been made, when Petrarch returned from Verona to Parma in the month of March, 1348. He brought with him his son John, whom he had withdrawn from the school of Rinaldo di Villa Franca, and placed under Gilberto di Parma, a good grammarian. His motive for this change of tutorship probably was, that he reckoned on Parma being henceforward his own principal place of residence, and his wish to have his son beside him.

Petrarch had scarcely arrived at Parma when he received a letter from Luchino Visconti, who had lately received the lordship of that city. Hearing of Petrarch's arrival there, the Prince, being at Milan, wrote to the poet, requesting some orange plants from his garden, together with a copy of verses. Petrarch sent him both, accompanied with a letter, in which he praises Luchino for his encouragement of learning and his cultivation of the Muses.

The plague was now increasing in Italy; and, after it had deprived Petrarch of many dear friends, it struck at the root of all his affections by attacking Laura. He describes his apprehensions on this occasion in several of his sonnets. The event confirmed his melancholy presages; for a letter from his friend Socrates informed him that Laura had died of the plague on the 1st of April, 1348. His biographers may well be believed, when they tell us that his grief was extreme. Laura's husband took the event more quietly, and consoled himself by marrying again, when only seven months a widower.

Petrarch, when informed of her death, wrote that marginal note upon his copy of Virgil, the authenticity of which has been so often, though unjustly, called in question. His words were the following:—

"Laura, illustrious for her virtues, and for a long time celebrated in my verses, for the first time appeared to my eyes on the 6th of April, 1327, in the church of St. Clara, at the first hour of the day. I was then in my youth. In the same city, and at the same hour, in the year 1348, this luminary disappeared from our world. I was then at Verona, ignorant of my wretched situation. Her chaste and beautiful body was buried the same day, after vespers, in the church of the Cordeliers. Her soul returned to its native mansion in heaven. I have written this with a pleasure mixed with bitterness, to retrace the melancholy remembrance of 'MY GREAT LOSS.' This loss convinces me that I have nothing now left worth living for, since the strongest cord of my life is broken. By the grace of God, I shall easily renounce

a world where my hopes have been vain and perishing. It is time for me to fly from Babylon when the knot that bound me to it is untied."

This copy of Virgil is famous, also, for a miniature picture expressing the subject of the Æneid; which, by the common consent of connoisseurs in painting, is the work of Simone Memmi. Mention has already been made of the friendly terms that subsisted between that painter and our poet; whence it may be concluded that Petrarch, who received this precious MS. in 1338, requested of Simone this mark of his friendship, to render it more valuable.

When the library of Pavia, together with the city, was plundered by the French in 1499, and when many MSS. were carried away to the library of Paris, a certain inhabitant of Pavia had the address to snatch this copy of Virgil from the general rapine. This individual was, probably, Antonio di Pirro, in whose hands or house the Virgil continued till the beginning of the sixteenth century, as Vellutello attests in his article on the origin of Laura. From him it passed to Antonio Agostino; afterwards to Fulvio Orsino, who prized it very dearly. At Orsino's death it was bought at a high price by Cardinal Federigo Borromeo, and placed in the Ambrosian library, which had been founded by him with much care and at vast expense.

Until the year 1795, this copy of Virgil was celebrated only on account of the memorandum already quoted, and a few short marginal notes, written for illustrations of the text; but, a part of the same leaf having been torn and detached from the cover, the librarians, by chance, perceived some written characters. Curiosity urged them to unglue it with the greatest care; but the parchment was so conglutinated with the board that the letters left their impression on the latter so palely and weakly, that the librarians had great difficulty in making out the following notice, written by Petrarch himself: "Liber hic furto mihi subreptus fuerat, anno domini mcccxxvi., in Kalend. Novembr., ac deinde restitutus, anno mcccxxxvii., die xvii. Aprilis, apud Aivin°."

Then follows a note by the poet himself, regarding his son: "Johannes noster, natus ad laborem et dolorem meum, et vivens gravibus atque perpetuis me curis exercuit, et acri dolore moriens vulneravit, qui cum paucos et lætos dies vidisset in vita sua, decessit in anno domini 1361, ætatis suæ xxv., die Julii x. seu ix. medio noctis inter diem veneris et sabbati. Rumor ad me pervenerat xiii° mensis ad vesperam, obiit autem Mlni illo publico excidio pestis insolito, quæ urbem illam, hactenus immunem, talibus malis nunc reperit atque invasit. Rumor autem primus ambiguus 8vo. Augusti, eodem anno, per famulum meum Mlno redeuntem, mox certus, per famulum Domni Theatini Roma venientem 18mo. mensis ejusdem Mercurii, sero ad me pervenit

de obitu Socratis mei amici, socii fratrisque optimi, qui obiisse dicitur Babilone seu Avenione, die mense Maii proximo. Amisi comitem ac solatium vitæ meæ. Recipe Xte Ihu, hos duos et reliquos quinque in eterna tabernacula tua."* He alludes to the death of other friends; but the entire note is too long to be quoted, and, in many places, is obscured by contractions, which make its meaning doubtful.

The perfect accordance of these memoranda with the other writings of the poet, conjoined with historical facts, show them incontestably to have come from the hand of Petrarch.

The precious MS. of Virgil, containing the autograph of Petrarch, is no longer in Italy. Like many other relics held sacred by the Italians, it was removed by the French during the last conquest of Italy.

Among the incidents of Petrarch's life, in 1348, we ought to notice his visits to Giacomo da Carrara, whose family had supplanted the Della Scalas at Padua, and to Manfredi Pio, the Padrone of Carpi, a beautiful little city, of the Modenese territory, situated on a fine plain, on the banks of the Secchio, about four miles from Correggio. Manfredi ruled it with reputation for twenty years. Petrarch was magnificently received by the Carraras; and, within two years afterwards, they bestowed upon him the canonicate of Padua, a promotion which was followed in the same year by his appointment to the archdeaconry of Parma, of which he had been hitherto only canon.

Not long after the death of Laura, on the 3rd of July of the same year, Petrarch lost Cardinal Colonna, who had been for so many years his friend and patron. By some historians it is said that this prelate died of the plague; but Petrarch thought that he sank under grief brought on by the disasters of his family. In the space of five years the Cardinal had lost his mother and six brothers.

Petrarch still maintained an interest in the Colonna family, though that interest was against his own political principles, during the good behaviour of the Tribune. After the folly and fall of Rienzo, it is probable that our poet's attachment to his old friends of the Roman aristocracy revived. At least, he

* *Translation.*—In the twenty-fifth year of his age, after a short though happy existence, our John departed this life in the year of Christ 1361, on the 10th of July, or rather on the 9th, at the midhour between Friday and Saturday. Sent into the world to my mortification and suffering, he was to me in life the cause of deep and unceasing solicitude, and in death of poignant grief. The news reached me on the evening of the 13th of the same month that he had fallen at Milan, in the general mortality caused by that unwonted scourge which at last discovered and visited so fearfully this hitherto-exempted city. On the 8th of August, the same year, a servant of mine returning from Milan brought me a rumour (which on the 18th of the same fatal month was confirmed by a servant of *Dominus Theatinus*) of the death of my Socrates, my companion, my best of brothers, at Babylon (Avignon, I mean) in the month of May. I have lost my comrade and the solace of my life! Receive, Christ Jesus, these two, and the five that remain, into thy eternal habitations!

thought it decent to write, on the death of Cardinal Colonna, a letter of condolence to his father, the aged Stefano, who was now verging towards his hundredth year. Soon after this letter reached him, old Stefano fell into the grave.

The death of Cardinal Colonna was extremely felt at Avignon, where it left a great void, his house having been the rendezvous of men of letters and genius. Those who composed his court could not endure Avignon after they had lost their Mæcenas. Three of them were the particular friends of Petrarch, namely, Socrates, Luca Christino, and Mainardo Accursio. Socrates, though not an Italian, was extremely embarrassed by the death of the Cardinal. He felt it difficult to live separated from Petrarch, and yet he could not determine to quit France for Italy. He wrote incessantly the most pressing letters to induce our poet to return and settle in Provence. Luca and Mainardo resolved to go and seek out Petrarch in Italy, in order to settle with him the place on which they should fix for their common residence, and where they should spend the rest of their lives in his society. They set out from Avignon in the month of March, 1349, and arrived at Parma, but did not find the poet, as he was gone on an excursion to Padua and Verona. They passed a day in his house to rest themselves, and, when they went away, left a letter in his library, telling him they had crossed the Alps to come and see him, but that, having missed him, as soon as they had finished an excursion which they meant to make, they would return and settle with him the means of their living together. Petrarch, on his return to Parma, wrote several interesting letters to Mainardo. In one of them he says, "I was much grieved that I had lost the pleasure of your company, and that of our worthy friend, Luca Christino. However, I am not without the consoling hope that my absence may be the means of hastening your return. As to your apprehensions about my returning to Vaucluse, I cannot deny that, at the entreaties of Socrates, I should return, provided I could procure an establishment in Provence, which would afford me an honourable pretence for residing there, and, at the same time, enable me to receive my friends with hospitality; but at present circumstances are changed. The Cardinal Colonna is dead, and my friends are all dispersed, excepting Socrates, who continues inviolably attached to Avignon.

"As to Vaucluse, I well know the beauties of that charming valley, and ten years' residence is a proof of my affection for the place. I have shown my love of it by the house which I built there. There I began my Africa, there I wrote the greater part of my epistles in prose and verse, and there I nearly finished all my eclogues. I never had so much leisure, nor felt so much enthusiasm, in any other spot. At Vaucluse I conceived the first idea of giving an epitome of the Lives of Illustrious Men, and there I wrote my Treatise on a Solitary Life, as well as that on

religious retirement. It was there, also, that I sought to moderate my passion for Laura, which, alas, solitude only cherished. In short, this lonely valley will for ever be pleasing to my recollections. There is, nevertheless, a sad change, produced by time. Both the Cardinal and everything that is dear to me have perished. The veil which covered my eyes is at length removed. I can now perceive the difference between Vaucluse and the rich mountains and vales and flourishing cities of Italy. And yet, forgive me, so strong are the prepossessions of youth, that I must confess I pine for Vaucluse, even whilst I acknowledge its inferiority to Italy."

Whilst Petrarch was thus flattering his imagination with hopes that were never to be realized, his two friends, who had proceeded to cross the Apennines, came to an untimely fate. On the 5th of June, 1349, a servant, whom Petrarch had sent to inquire about some alarming accounts of the travellers that had gone abroad, returned sooner than he was expected, and showed by his face that he brought no pleasant tidings. Petrarch was writing—the pen fell from his hand. "What news do you bring?" "Very bad news! Your two friends, in crossing the Apennines, were attacked by robbers." "O God! what has happened to them?" The messenger replied, "Mainardo, who was behind his companions, was surrounded and murdered. Luca, hearing of his fate, came back sword in hand. He fought alone against ten, and he wounded some of the assailants, but at last he received many wounds, of which he lies almost dead. The robbers fled with their booty. The peasants assembled, and pursued, and would have captured them, if some gentlemen, unworthy of being called so, had not stopped the pursuit, and received the villains into their castles. Luca was seen among the rocks, but no one knows what is become of him." Petrarch, in the deepest agitation, despatched fleet couriers to Placenza, to Florence, and to Rome, to obtain intelligence about Luca.

These ruffians, who came from Florence, were protected by the Ubaldini, one of the most powerful and ancient families in Tuscany. As the murder was perpetrated within the territory of Florence, Petrarch wrote indignantly to the magistrates and people of that State, intreating them to avenge an outrage on their fellow citizens. Luca, it appears, expired of his wounds.

Petrarch's letter had its full effect. The Florentine commonwealth despatched soldiers, both horse and foot, against the Ubaldini and their banditti, and decreed that every year an expedition should be sent out against them till they should be routed out of their Alpine caverns. The Florentine troops directed their march to Monte Gemmoli, an almost impregnable rock, which they blockaded and besieged. The banditti issued forth from their strongholds, and skirmished with overmuch confidence in their vantage ground. At this crisis, the Florentine cavalry, having

ascended the hill, dismounted from their horses, pushed forward on the banditti before they could retreat into their fortress, and drove them, sword in hand, within its inmost circle. The Florentines thus possessed themselves of Monte Gemmoli, and, in like manner, of several other strongholds. There were others which they could not take by storm, but they laid waste the plains and cities which supplied the robbers with provisions; and, after having done great damage to the Ubaldini, they returned safe and sound to Florence.

While Petrarch was at Mantua, in February, 1350, the Cardinal Guy of Boulogne, legate of the holy see, arrived there after a papal mission to Hungary. Petrarch was much attached to him. The Cardinal and several eminent persons who attended him had frequent conversations with our poet, in which they described to him the state of Germany and the situation of the Emperor.

Clement VI., who had reason to be satisfied with the submissiveness of this Prince, wished to attract him into Italy, where he hoped to oppose him to the Visconti, who had put themselves at the head of the Ghibeline party, and gave much annoyance to the Guelphs. His Holiness strongly solicited him to come; but Charles's situation would not permit him for the present to undertake such an expedition. There were still some troubles in Germany that remained to be appeased; besides, the Prince's purse was exhausted by the largesses which he had paid for his election, and his poverty was extreme.

It must be owned that a prince in such circumstances could hardly be expected to set out for the subjugation of Italy. Petrarch, however, took a romantic view of the Emperor's duties, and thought that the restoration of the Roman empire was within Charles's grasp. Our poet never lost sight of his favourite chimera, the re-establishment of Rome in her ancient dominion. It was what he called one of his principles, that Rome had a right to govern the world. Wild as this vision was, he had seen Rienzo attempt its realization; and, if the Tribune had been more prudent, there is no saying how nearly he might have approached to the achievement of so marvellous an issue. But Rienzo was fallen irrecoverably, and Petrarch now desired as ardently to see the Emperor in Italy, as ever he had sighed for the success of the Tribune. He wrote to the Emperor a long letter from Padua, a few days after the departure of the Cardinal.

"I am agitated," he says, "in sending this epistle, when I think from whom it comes, and to whom it is addressed. Placed as I am, in obscurity, I am dazzled by the splendour of your name; but love has banished fear: this letter will at least make known to you my fidelity, and my zeal. Read it, I conjure you! You will not find in it the insipid adulation which is the plague of monarchs. Flattery is an art unknown to me. I have to offer

you only complaints and regrets. You have forgotten us. I say more—you have forgotten yourself in neglecting Italy. We had high hopes that Heaven had sent you to restore us our liberty; but it seems that you refuse this mission, and, whilst the time should be spent in acting, you lose it in deliberating.

"You see, Cæsar, with what confidence an obscure man addresses you, a man who has not even the advantage of being known to you. But, far from being offended with the liberty I take, you ought rather to thank your own character, which inspires me with such confidence. To return to my subject—wherefore do you lose time in consultation? To all appearance, you are sure of the future, if you will avail yourself of the present. You cannot be ignorant that the success of great affairs often hangs upon an instant, and that a day has been frequently sufficient to consummate what it required ages to undo. Believe me, your glory and the safety of the commonwealth, your own interests, as well as ours, require that there be no delay. You are still young, but time is flying; and old age will come and take you by surprise when you are at least expecting it. Are you afraid of too soon commencing an enterprise for which a long life would scarcely suffice?

"The Roman empire, shaken by a thousand storms, and as often deceived by fallacious calms, places at last its whole hopes in you. It recovers a little breath even under the shelter of your name; but hope alone will not support it. In proportion as you know the grandeur of the undertaking, consummate it the sooner. Let not the love of your Transalpine dominions detain you longer. In beholding Germany, think of Italy. If the one has given you birth, the other has given you greatness. If you are king of the one, you are king and emperor of the other. Let me say, without meaning offence to other nations, that here is the head of your monarchy. Everywhere else you will find only its members. What a glorious project to unite those members to their head!

"I am aware that you dislike all innovation; but what I propose would be no innovation on your part. Italy is as well known to you as Germany. Brought hither in your youth by your illustrious sire, he made you acquainted with our cities and our manners, and taught you here the first lessons of war. In the bloom of your youth, you have obtained great victories. Can you fear at present to enter a country where you have triumphed since your childhood?

"By the singular favour of Heaven we have regained the ancient right of being governed by a prince of our own nation.* Let Germany say what she will, Italy is veritably your country * * * * * Come with haste to restore peace to Italy. Behold

* Petrarch's words are: "civi servare suo;" but he takes the liberty of considering Charles as—adoptively—Italian, though that Prince was born at Prague.

Rome, once the empress of the world, now pale, with scattered locks and torn garments, at your feet, imploring your presence and support!" Then follows a dissertation on the history and heroes of Rome, which might be wearisome if transcribed to a modern reader. But the epistle, upon the whole, is manly and eloquent.

A few days after despatching his letter to the Emperor, Petrarch made a journey to Verona to see his friends. There he wrote to Socrates. In this letter, after enumerating the few friends whom the plague had spared, he confesses that he could not flatter himself with the hope of being able to join them in Provence. He therefore invokes them to come to Italy, and to settle either at Parma or at Padua, or any other place that would suit them. His remaining friends, here enumerated, were only Barbato of Sulmona, Francesco Rinucci, John Boccaccio, Lælius, Guido Settimo, and Socrates.

Petrarch had returned to Padua, there to rejoin the Cardinal of Boulogne. The Cardinal came back thither at the end of April, 1350, and, after dispensing his blessings, spiritual and temporal, set out for Avignon, travelling by way of Milan and Genoa. Petrarch accompanied the prelate out of personal attachment on a part of his journey. The Cardinal was fond of his conversation, but sometimes rallied the poet on his enthusiasm for his native Italy. When they reached the territory of Verona, near the lake of Guarda, they were struck by the beauty of the prospect, and stopped to contemplate it. In the distance were the Alps, topped with snow even in summer. Beneath was the lake of Guarda, with its flux and reflux, like the sea, and around them were the rich hills and fertile valleys. "It must be confessed," said the Legate to Petrarch, "that your country is more beautiful than ours." The face of Petrarch brightened up. "But you must agree," continued the Cardinal, perhaps to moderate the poet's exultation, "that ours is more tranquil." "That is true," replied Petrarch, "but we can obtain tranquillity whenever we choose to come to our senses, and desire peace, whereas you cannot procure those beauties which nature has lavished *on us*."

Petrarch here took leave of the Cardinal, and set out for Parma. Taking Mantua in his way, he set out from thence in the evening, in order to sleep at Luzora, five leagues from the Po. The lords of that city had sent a courier to Mantua, desiring that he would honour them with his presence at supper. The melting snows and the overflowing river had made the roads nearly impassable; but he reached the place in time to avail himself of the invitation. His hosts gave him a magnificent reception. The supper was exquisite, the dishes rare, the wines delicious, and the company full of gaiety. But a small matter, however, will spoil the finest feast. The supper was served up in a damp, low hall, and all sorts of insects annoyed the convivials. To crown their misfor-

tune an army of frogs, attracted, no doubt, by the odour of the meats, crowded and croaked about them, till they were obliged to leave their unfinished supper.

Petrarch returned next day for Parma. We find, from the original fragments of his poems, brought to light by Ubaldini, that he was occupied in retouching them during the summer which he passed at Parma, waiting for the termination of the excessive heats, to go to Rome and attend the jubilee. With a view to make the journey pleasanter, he invited Guglielmo di Pastrengo to accompany him, in a letter written in Latin verse. Nothing would have delighted Guglielmo more than a journey to Rome with Petrarch; but he was settled at Verona, and could not absent himself from his family.

In lieu of Pastrengo, Petrarch found a respectable old abbot, and several others who were capable of being agreeable, and from their experience, useful companions to him on the road. In the middle of October, 1350, they departed from Florence for Rome, to attend the jubilee. On his way between Bolsena and Viterbo, he met with an accident which threatened dangerous consequences, and which he relates in a letter to Boccaccio.

"On the 15th of October," he says, "we left Bolsena, a little town scarcely known at present; but interesting from having been anciently one of the principal places in Etruria. Occupied with the hopes of seeing Rome in five days, I reflected on the changes in our modes of thinking which are made by the course of years. Fourteen years ago I repaired to the great city from sheer curiosity to see its wonders. The second time I came was to receive the laurel. My third and fourth journey had no object but to render services to my persecuted friends. My present visit ought to be more happy, since its only object is my eternal salvation." It appears, however, that the horses of the travellers had no such devotional feelings; "for," he continues, "whilst my mind was full of these thoughts, the horse of the old abbot, which was walking upon my left, kicking at my horse, struck me upon the leg, just below the knee. The blow was so violent that it sounded as if a bone was broken. My attendants came up. I felt an acute pain, which made me, at first, desirous of stopping; but, fearing the dangerousness of the place, I made a virtue of necessity, and went on to Viterbo, where we arrived very late on the 16th of October. Three days afterwards they dragged me to Rome with much trouble. As soon as I arrived at Rome, I called for doctors, who found the bone laid bare. It was not, however, thought to be broken; though the shoe of the horse had left its impression."

However impatient Petrarch might be to look once more on the beauties of Rome, and to join in the jubilee, he was obliged to keep his bed for many days.

The concourse of pilgrims to this jubilee was immense. One

can scarcely credit the common account that there were about a million pilgrims at one time assembled in the great city. "We do not perceive," says Petrarch, "that the plague has depopulated the world." And, indeed, if this computation of the congregated pilgrims approaches the truth, we cannot but suspect that the alleged depopulation of Europe, already mentioned, must have been exaggerated. "The crowds," he continues, "diminished a little during summer and the gathering-in of the harvest; but recommenced towards the end of the year. The great nobles and ladies from beyond the Alps came the last."

Many of the female pilgrims arrived by way of the marshes of Ancona, where Bernardino di Roberto, Lord of Ravenna, waited for them, and scandal whispered that his assiduities and those of his suite were but too successful in seducing them. A contemporary author, in allusion to the circumstance, remarks that journeys and indulgences are not good for young persons, and that the fair ones had better have remained at home, since the vessel that stays in port is never shipwrecked.

The strangers, who came from all countries, were for the most part unacquainted with the Italian language, and were obliged to employ interpreters in making their confession, for the sake of obtaining absolution. It was found that many of the pretended interpreters were either imperfectly acquainted with the language of the foreigners, or were knaves in collusion with the priestly confessors, who made the poor pilgrims confess whatever they chose, and pay for their sins accordingly. A better subject for a scene in comedy could scarcely be imagined. But, to remedy this abuse, penitentiaries were established at Rome, in which the confessors understood foreign languages.

The number of days fixed for the Roman pilgrims to visit the churches was thirty; and fifteen or ten for the Italians and other strangers, according to the distance of the places from which they came.

Petrarch says that it is inconceivable how the city of Rome, whose adjacent fields were untilled, and whose vineyards had been frozen the year before, could for twelve months support such a confluence of people. He extols the hospitality of the citizens, and the abundance of food which prevailed; but Villani and others give us more disagreeable accounts—namely, that the Roman citizens became hotel-keepers, and charged exorbitantly for lodgings, and for whatever they sold. Numbers of pilgrims were thus necessitated to live poorly; and this, added to their fatigue and the heats of summer, produced a great mortality.

As soon as Petrarch, relieved by surgical skill from the wound in his leg, was allowed to go out, he visited all the churches.

After having performed his duties at the jubilee, Petrarch returned to Padua, taking the road by Arezzo, the town which had the honour of his birth. Leonardo Aretino says that his fellow-

townsmen crowded around him with delight, and received him with such honours as could have been paid only to a king.

In the same month of December, 1350, he discovered a treasure which made him happier than a king. Perhaps a royal head might not have equally valued it. It was a copy of Quintilian's work "De Institutione Oratoria," which, till then, had escaped all his researches. On the very day of the discovery he wrote a letter, to Quintilian, according to his fantastic custom of epistolizing the ancients. Some days afterwards, he left Arezzo to pursue his journey. The principal persons of the town took leave of him publicly at his departure, after pointing out to him the house in which he was born. "It was a small house," says Petrarch, "befitting an exile, as my father was." They told him that the proprietors would have made some alterations in it; but the town had interposed and prevented them, determined that the place should remain the same as when it was first consecrated by his birth. The poet related what had been mentioned to a young man who wrote to him expressly to ask whether Arezzo could really boast of being his birthplace. Petrarch added, that Arezzo had done more for him as a stranger than Florence as a citizen. In truth, his family was of Florence; and it was only by accident that he was born at Arezzo. He then went to Florence, where he made but a short stay. There he found his friends still alarmed about the accident which had befallen him in his journey to Rome, the news of which he had communicated to Boccaccio.

Petrarch went on to Padua. On approaching it, he perceived a universal mourning. He soon learned the foul catastrophe which had deprived the city of one of its best masters.

Jacopo di Carrara had received into his house his cousin Guglielmo. Though the latter was known to be an evil-disposed person, he was treated with kindness by Jacopo, and ate at his table. On the 21st of December, whilst Jacopo was sitting at supper, in the midst of his friends, his people and his guards, the monster Guglielmo plunged a dagger into his breast with such celerity, that even those who were nearest could not ward off the blow. Horror-struck, they lifted him up, whilst others put the assassin to instant death.

The fate of Jacopo Carrara gave Petrarch a dislike for Padua, and his recollections of Vaucluse bent his unsettled mind to return to its solitude; but he tarried at Padua during the winter. Here he spent a great deal of his time with Ildebrando Conti, bishop of that city, a man of rank and merit. One day, as he was dining at the Bishop's palace, two Carthusian monks were announced: they were well received by the Bishop, as he was partial to their order. He asked them what brought them to Padua. "We are going," they said, "to Treviso, by the direction of our general, there to remain and establish a monastery." Ilde-

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brando asked if they knew Father Gherardo, Petrarch's brother. The two monks, who did not know the poet, gave the most pleasing accounts of his brother.

The plague, they said, having got into the convent of Montrieux, the prior, a pious but timorous man, told his monks that flight was the only course which they could take: Gherardo answered with courage, "Go whither you please! As for myself I will remain in the situation in which Heaven has placed me." The prior fled to his own country, where death soon overtook him. Gherardo remained in the convent, where the plague spared him, and left him alone, after having destroyed, within a few days, thirty-four of the brethren who had continued with him. He paid them every service, received their last sighs, and buried them when death had taken off those to whom that office belonged. With only a dog left for his companion, Gherardo watched at night to guard the house, and took his repose by day. When the summer was over, he went to a neighbouring monastery of the Carthusians, who enabled him to restore his convent.

While the Carthusians were making this honourable mention of Father Gherardo, the prelate cast his eyes from time to time upon Petrarch. "I know not," says the poet, "whether my eyes were filled with tears, but my heart was tenderly touched." The Carthusians, at last discovering who Petrarch was, saluted him with congratulations. Petrarch gives an account of this interview in a letter to his brother himself.

Padua was too near to Venice for Petrarch not to visit now and then that city which he called the wonder of the world. He there made acquaintance with Andrea Dandolo, who was made Doge in 1343, though he was only thirty-six years of age, an extraordinary elevation for so young a man; but he possessed extraordinary merit. His mind was cultivated; he loved literature, and easily became, as far as mutual demonstrations went, the personal friend of Petrarch; though the Doge, as we shall see, excluded this personal friendship from all influence on his political conduct.

The commerce of the Venetians made great progress under the Dogeship of Andrea Dandolo. It was then that they began to trade with Egypt and Syria, whence they brought silk, pearls, the spices, and other products of the East. This prosperity excited the jealousy of the Genoese, as it interfered with a commerce which they had hitherto monopolized. When the Venetians had been chased from Constantinople by the Emperor Michael Paleologus, they retained several fortresses in the Black Sea, which enabled them to continue their trade with the Tartars in that sea, and to frequent the fair of Tana. The Genoese, who were masters of Pera, a suburb of Constantinople, would willingly have joined the Greeks in expelling their Italian rivals altogether from the

Black Sea; and privateering hostilities actually commenced between the two republics, which, in 1350, extended to the serious aspect of a national war.

The winter of that year was passed on both sides in preparations. The Venetians sent ambassadors to the King of Arragon, who had some differences with the Genoese about the Island of Sardinia, and to the Emperor of Constantinople, who saw with any sensation in the world but delight the flag of Genoa flying over the walls of Pera. A league between those three powers was quickly concluded, and their grand, common object was to destroy the city of Genoa.

It was impossible that these great movements of Venice should be unknown at Padua. Petrarch, ever zealous for the common good of Italy, saw with pain the kindling of a war which could not but be fatal to her, and thought it his duty to open his heart to the Doge of Venice, who had shown him so much friendship. He addressed to him, therefore, the following letter from Padua, on the 14th of March, 1351:—

"My love for my country forces me to break silence; the goodness of your character encourages me. Can I hold my peace whilst I hear the symptoms of a coming storm that menaces my beloved country? Two puissant people are flying to arms; two flourishing cities are agitated by the approach of war. These cities are placed by nature like the two eyes of Italy; the one in the south and west, and the other in the east and north, to dominate over the two seas that surround them; so that, even after the destruction of the Roman empire, this beautiful country was still regarded as the queen of the world. I know that proud nations denied her the empire of the land, but who dared ever to dispute with her the empire of the sea?

"I shudder to think of our prospects. If Venice and Genoa turn their victorious arms against each other, it is all over with us; we lose our glory and the command of the sea. In this calamity we shall have a consolation which we have ever had, namely, that if our enemies rejoice in our calamities, they cannot at least derive any glory from them.

"In great affairs I have always dreaded the counsels of the young. Youthful ignorance and inexperience have been the ruin of many empires. I, therefore, learn with pleasure that you have named a council of elders, to whom you have confided this affair. I expected no less than this from your wisdom, which is far beyond your years.

"The state of your republic distresses me. I know the difference that there is between the tumult of arms and the tranquillity of Parnassus. I know that the sounds of Apollo's lyre accord but ill with the trumpets of Mars; but if you have abandoned Parnassus, it has been only to fulfil the duties of a good citizen and of a vigilant chief. I am persuaded, at the same time,

that in the midst of arms you think of peace; that you would regard it as a triumph for yourself, and the greatest blessing you could procure for your country. Did not Hannibal himself say that a sure peace was more valuable than a hoped-for victory! If truth has extorted this confession from the most warlike man that ever lived, is it not plain that a pacific man ought to prefer peace even to a certain victory? Who does not know that peace is the greatest of blessings, and that war is the source of all evils?

"Do not deceive yourself; you have to deal with a keen people who know not what it is to be conquered. Would it not be better to transfer the war to Damascus, to Susa, or to Memphis? Think besides, that those whom you are going to attack are your brothers. At Thebes, of old, two brothers fought to their mutual destruction. Must Italy renew, in our days, so atrocious a spectacle?

"Let us examine what may be the results of this war. Whether you are conqueror or are conquered, one of the eyes of Italy will necessarily be blinded, and the other much weakened; for it would be folly to flatter yourself with the hopes of conquering so strong an enemy without much effusion of blood.

"Brave men, powerful people! (I speak here to both of you) what is your object—to what do you aspire? What will be the end of your dissensions? It is not the blood of the Carthaginians or the Numantians that you are about to spill, but it is Italian blood; the blood of a people who would be the first to start up and offer to expend their blood, if any barbarous nation were to attempt a new irruption among us. In that event, their bodies would be the bucklers and ramparts of our common country; they would live, or they would die with us. Ought the pleasure of avenging a slight offence to carry more weight with you than the public good and your own safety? Let revenge be the delight of women. Is it not more glorious for men to forget an injury than to avenge it? to pardon an enemy than to destroy him?

"If my feeble voice could make itself heard among those grave men who compose your council, I am persuaded that you would not only *not* reject the peace which is offered to you, but go to meet and embrace it closely, so that it might not escape you. Consult your wise old men who love the republic; they will speak the same language to you that I do.

"You, my lord, who are at the head of the council, and who govern your republic, ought to recollect that the glory or the shame of these events will fall principally on you. Raise yourself above yourself; look into, examine everything with attention. Compare the success of the war with the evils which it brings in its train. Weigh in a balance the good effects and the evil, and you will say with Hannibal, that an hour is sufficient to destroy the work of many years.

"The renown of your country is more ancient than is generally believed. Several ages before the city of Venice was built, I find not only the name of the Venetians famous, but also that of one of their dukes. Would you submit to the caprices of fortune a glory acquired for so long a time, and at so great a cost? You will render a great service to your republic, if, preferring her safety to her glory, you give her incensed and insane populace prudent and useful counsels, instead of offering them brilliant and specious projects. The wise say that we cannot purchase a virtue more precious than what is bought at the expense of glory. If you adopt this axiom, your character will be handed down to posterity, like that of the Duke of the Venetians, to whom I have alluded. All the world will admire and love you.

"To conceal nothing from you, I confess that I have heard with grief of your league with the King of Arragon. What! shall Italians go and implore succour of barbarous kings to destroy Italians? You will say, perhaps, that your enemies have set you the example. My answer is, that they are equally culpable. According to report, Venice, in order to satiate her rage, calls to her aid tyrants of the west; whilst Genoa brings in those of the east. This is the source of our calamities. Carried away by the admiration of strange things, despising, I know not why, the good things which we find in our own climate, we sacrifice sound Italian faith to barbarian perfidy. Madmen that we are, we seek among venal souls that which we could find among our own brethren,

"Nature has given us for barriers the Alps and the two seas. Avarice, envy, and pride, have opened these natural defences to the Cimbri, the Huns, the Goths, the Gauls, and the Spaniards. How often have we recited the words of Virgil:—

> "'Impius hæc tam culta novalia miles habebit,
> Barbarus has segetes.'

"Athens and Lacedemon had between them a species of rivalship similar to yours: but their forces were not by any means so nearly balanced. Lacedemon had an advantage over Athens, which put it in the power of the former to destroy her rival, if she had wished it; but she replied, 'God forbid that I should pull out one of the eyes of Greece!' If this beautiful sentiment came from a people whom Plato reproaches with their avidity for conquest and dominion, what still softer reply ought we not to expect from the most modest of nations!

"Amidst the movements which agitate you, it is impossible for me to be tranquil. When I see one party cutting down trees to construct vessels, and others sharpening their swords and darts, I should think myself guilty if I did not seize my pen, which is my only weapon, to counsel peace. I am aware with what circumspection we ought to speak to our superiors; but the love of

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our country has no superior. If it should carry me beyond bounds, it will serve as my excuse before you, and oblige you to pardon me.

"Throwing myself at the feet of the chiefs of two nations who are going to war, I say to them, with tears in my eyes, 'Throw away your arms; give one another the embrace of peace! unite your hearts and your colours. By this means the ocean and the Euxine shall be open to you. Your ships will arrive in safety at Taprobane, at the Fortunate Isles, at Thule, and even at the poles. The kings and their people will meet you with respect; the Indian, the Englishman, the Æthiopian, will dread you. May peace reign among you, and may you have nothing to fear!' Adieu! greatest of dukes, and best of men!"

This letter produced no effect. Andrea Dandolo, in his answer to it, alleges the thousand and one affronts and outrages which Venice had suffered from Genoa. At the same time he pays a high compliment to the eloquence of Petrarch's epistle, and says that it is a production which could emanate only from a mind inspired by the divine Spirit.

During the spring of this year, 1351, Petrarch put his last finish to a canzone, on the subject still nearest to his heart, the death of his Laura, and to a sonnet on the same subject. In April, his attention was recalled from visionary things by the arrival of Boccaccio, who was sent by the republic of Florence to announce to him the recall of his family to their native land, and the restoration of his family fortune, as well as to invite him to the home of his ancestors, in the name of the Florentine republic. The invitation was conveyed in a long and flattering letter; but it appeared, from the very contents of this epistle, that the Florentines wished our poet's acceptance of their offer to be as advantageous to themselves as to him. They were establishing a University, and they wished to put Petrarch at the head of it. Petrarch replied in a letter apparently full of gratitude and satisfaction, but in which he by no means pledged himself to be the gymnasiarch of their new college; and, agreeably to his original intention, he set out from Padua on the 3rd of May, 1351, for Provence.

Petrarch took the road to Vicenza, where he arrived at sunset. He hesitated whether he should stop there, or take advantage of the remainder of the day and go farther. But, meeting with some interesting persons whose conversation beguiled him, night came on before he was aware how late it was. Their conversation, in the course of the evening, ran upon Cicero. Many were the eulogies passed on the great old Roman; but Petrarch, after having lauded his divine genius and eloquence, said something about his inconsistency. Every one was astonished at our poet's boldness, but particularly a man, venerable for his age and knowledge, who was an idolater of Cicero. Petrarch argued

pretty freely against the political character of the ancient orator. The same opinion as to Cicero's weakness seems rather to have gained ground in later ages. At least, it is now agreed that Cicero's political life will not bear throughout an uncharitable investigation, though the political difficulties of his time demand abundant allowance.

Petrarch departed next morning for Verona, where he reckoned on remaining only for a few days; but it was impossible for him to resist the importunities of Azzo Correggio, Guglielmo di Pastrengo, and his other friends. By them he was detained during the remainder of the month. "The requests of a friend," he said, on this occasion, "are always chains upon me."

Petrarch arrived, for the sixth time, at Vaucluse on the 27th of June, 1351. He first announced himself to Philip of Cabassoles, Bishop of Cavaillon, to whom he had already sent, during his journey, some Latin verses, in which he speaks of Vaucluse as the most charming place in the universe. "When a child," he says, "I visited it, and it nourished my youth in its sunny bosom. When grown to manhood, I passed some of the pleasantest years of my life in the shut-up valley. Grown old, I wish to pass in it my last years."

The sight of his romantic hermitage, of the capacious grotto which had listened to his sighs for Laura, of his garden, and of his library, was, undoubtedly, sweet to Petrarch; and, though he had promised Boccaccio to come back to Italy, he had not the fortitude to determine on a sudden return. He writes to one of his Italian friends, "When I left my native country, I promised to return to it in the autumn; but time, place, and circumstances, often oblige us to change our resolutions. As far as I can judge, it will be necessary for me to remain here for two years. My friends in Italy, I trust, will pardon me if I do not keep my promise to them. The inconstancy of the human mind must serve as my excuse. I have now experienced that change of place is the only thing which can long keep from us the *ennui* that is inseparable from a sedentary life."

At the same time, whilst Vaucluse threw recollections tender, though melancholy, over Petrarch's mind, it does not appear that Avignon had assumed any new charm in his absence: on the contrary, he found it plunged more than ever in luxury, wantonness, and gluttony. Clement VI. had replenished the church, at the request of the French king, with numbers of cardinals, many of whom were so young and licentious, that the most scandalous abominations prevailed amongst them. "At this time," says Matthew Villani, "no regard was paid either to learning or virtue; and a man needed not to blush for anything, if he could cover his head with a red hat. Pietro Ruggiero, one of those exemplary new cardinals, was only eighteen years of age." Petrarch vented his indignation on this occasion in his seventh

eclogue, which is a satire upon the Pontiff and his cardinals, the interlocutors being Micione, or Clement himself, and Epi, or the city of Avignon. The poem, if it can be so called, is clouded with allegory, and denaturalized with pastoral conceits; yet it is worth being explored by any one anxious to trace the first fountains of reform among Catholics, as a proof of church abuses having been exposed, two centuries before the Reformation, by a Catholic and a churchman.

At this crisis, the Court of Avignon, which, in fact, had not known very well what to do about the affairs of Rome, were now anxious to inquire what sort of government would be the most advisable, after the fall of Rienzo. Since that event, the Cardinal Legate had re-established the ancient government, having created two senators, the one from the house of Colonna, the other from that of the Orsini. But, very soon, those houses were divided by discord, and the city was plunged into all the evils which it had suffered before the existence of the Tribuneship. "The community at large," says Matthew Villani, "returned to such condition, that strangers and travellers found themselves like sheep among wolves." Clement VI. was weary of seeing the metropolis of Christianity a prey to anarchy. He therefore chose four cardinals, whose united deliberations might appease these troubles, and he imagined that he could establish in Rome a form of government that should be durable. The cardinals requested Petrarch to give his opinion on this important affair. Petrarch wrote to them a most eloquent epistle, full of enthusiastic ideas of the grandeur of Rome. It is not exactly known what effect he produced by his writing on this subject; but on that account we are not to conclude that he wrote in vain.

Petrarch had brought to Avignon his son John, who was still very young. He had obtained for him a canonicate at Verona. Thither he immediately despatched him, with letters to Guglielmo di Pastrengo and Rinaldo di Villa Franca, charging the former of these friends to superintend his son's general character and manners, and the other to cultivate his understanding. Petrarch, in his letter to Rinaldo, gives a description of John, which is neither very flattering to the youth, nor calculated to give us a favourable opinion of his father's mode of managing his education. By his own account, it appears that he had never brought the boy to confide in him. This was a capital fault, for the young are naturally ingenuous; so that the acquisition of their confidence is the very first step towards their docility; and, for maintaining parental authority, there is no need to overawe them. "As far as I can judge of my son," says Petrarch, "he has a tolerable understanding; but I am not certain of this, for I do not sufficiently know him. When he is with me he always keeps silence; whether my presence is irksome and confusing to him, or whether shame for his ignorance closes his lips. I suspect it is the latter,

for I perceive too clearly his antipathy to letters. I never saw it stronger in any one; he dreads and detests nothing so much as a book; yet he was brought up at Parma, Verona, and Padua. I sometimes direct a few sharp pleasantries at this disposition. 'Take care,' I say, 'lest you should eclipse your neighbour, Virgil.' When I talk in this manner, he looks down and blushes. On this behaviour alone I build my hope. He is modest, and has a docility which renders him susceptible of every impression." This is a melancholy confession, on the part of Petrarch, of his own incompetence to make the most of his son's mind, and a confession the more convincing that it is made unconsciously.

In the summer of 1352, the people of Avignon witnessed the impressive spectacle of the far-famed Tribune Rienzo entering their city, but in a style very different from the pomp of his late processions in Rome. He had now for his attendants only two archers, between whom he walked as a prisoner. It is necessary to say a few words about the circumstances which befell Rienzo after his fall, and which brought him now to the Pope's tribunal at Avignon.

Petrarch says of him at this period, "The Tribune, formerly so powerful and dreaded, but now the most unhappy of men, has been brought hither as a prisoner. I praised and I adored him. I loved his virtue, and I admired his courage. I thought that Rome was about to resume, under him, the empire she formerly held. Ah! had he continued as he began, he would have been praised and admired by the world and by posterity. On entering the city," Petrarch continues, "he inquired if I was there. I knew not whether he hoped for succour from me, or what I could do to serve him. In the process against him they accuse him of nothing criminal. They cannot impute to him having joined with bad men. All that they charge him with is an attempt to give freedom to the republic, and to make Rome the centre of its government. And is this a crime worthy of the wheel or the gibbet? A Roman citizen afflicted to see his country, which is by right the mistress of the world, the slave of the vilest of men!"

Clement was glad to have Rienzo in his power, and ordered him into his presence. Thither the Tribune came, not in the least disconcerted. He denied the accusation of heresy, and insisted that his cause should be re-examined with more equity. The Pope made him no reply, but imprisoned him in a high tower, in which he was chained by the leg to the floor of his apartment. In other respects he was treated mildly, allowed books to read, and supplied with dishes from the Pope's kitchen.

Rienzo begged to be allowed an advocate to defend him; his request was refused. This refusal enraged Petrarch, who wrote, according to De Sade and others, on this occasion, that mysterious letter, which is found in his "Epistles without a title." It is an

appeal to the Romans in behalf of their Tribune. I must confess that even the authority of De Sade does not entirely eradicate from my mind a suspicion as to the spuriousness of this inflammatory letter, from the consequences of which Petrarch could hardly have escaped with impunity.

One of the circumstances that detained Petrarch at Avignon was the illness of the Pope, which retarded his decision on several important affairs. Clement VI. was fast approaching to his end, and Petrarch had little hope of his convalescence, at least in the hands of doctors. A message from the Pope produced an imprudent letter from the poet, in which he says, "Holy father! I shudder at the account of your fever; but, believe me, I am not a flatterer. I tremble to see your bed always surrounded with physicians, who are never agreed, because it would be a reproach to the second to think like the first. 'It is not to be doubted,' as Pliny says, 'that physicians, desiring to raise a name by their discoveries, make experiments upon us, and thus barter away our lives. There is no law for punishing their extreme ignorance. They learn their trade at our expense, they make some progress in the art of curing; and they alone are permitted to murder with impunity.' Holy father! consider as your enemies the crowd of physicians who beset you. It is in our age that we behold verified the prediction of the elder Cato, who declared that corruption would be general when the Greeks should have transmitted the sciences to Rome, and, above all, the science of healing. Whole nations have done without this art. The Roman republic, according to Pliny, was without physicians for six hundred years, and was never in a more flourishing condition."

The Pope, a poor dying old man, communicated Petrarch's letter immediately to his physicians, and it kindled in the whole faculty a flame of indignation, worthy of being described by Molière. Petrarch made a general enemy of the physicians, though, of course, the weakest and the worst of them were the first to attack him. One of them told him, "You are a foolhardy man, who, contemning the physicians, have no fear either of the fever or of the malaria." Petrarch replied, "I certainly have no assurance of being free from the attacks of either; but, if I were attacked by either, I should not think of calling in physicians."

His first assailant was one of Clement's own physicians, who loaded him with scurrility in a formal letter. These circumstances brought forth our poet's "Four Books of Invectives against Physicians," a work in which he undoubtedly exposes a great deal of contemporary quackery, but which, at the same time, scarcely leaves the physician-hunter on higher ground than his antagonists.

In the last year of his life, Clement VI. wished to attach our poet permanently to his court by making him his secretary, and Petrarch, after much coy refusal, was at last induced, by the

solicitations of his friends, to accept the office. But before he could enter upon it, an objection to his filling it was unexpectedly started. It was discovered that his style was too lofty to suit the humility of the Roman Church. The elevation of Petrarch's style might be obvious, but certainly the humility of the Church was a bright discovery. Petrarch, according to his own account, so far from promising to bring down his magniloquence to a level with church humility, seized the objection as an excuse for declining the secretaryship. He compares his joy on this occasion to that of a prisoner finding the gates of his prison thrown open. He returned to Vaucluse, where he waited impatiently for the autumn, when he meant to return to Italy. He thus describes, in a letter to his dear Simonides, the manner of life which he there led:—

"I make war upon my body, which I regard as my enemy. My eyes, that have made me commit so many follies, are well fixed on a safe object. They look only on a woman who is withered, dark, and sunburnt. Her soul, however, is as white as her complexion is black, and she has the air of being so little conscious of her own appearance, that her homeliness may be said to become her. She passes whole days in the open fields, when the grasshoppers can scarcely endure the sun. Her tanned hide braves the heats of the dog-star, and, in the evening, she arrives as fresh as if she had just risen from bed. She does all the work of my house, besides taking care of her husband and children and attending my guests. She seems occupied with everybody but herself. At night she sleeps on vine-branches; she eats only black bread and roots, and drinks water and vinegar. If you were to give her anything more delicate, she would be the worse for it: such is the force of habit.

"Though I have still two fine suits of clothes, I never wear them. If you saw me, you would take me for a labourer or a shepherd, though I was once so tasteful in my dress. The times are changed; the eyes which I wished to please are now shut; and, perhaps, even if they were opened, they would not *now* have the same empire over me."

In another letter from Vaucluse, he says: "I rise at midnight; I go out at break of day; I study in the fields as in my library; I read, I write, I dream; I struggle against indolence, luxury, and pleasure. I wander all day among the arid mountains, the fresh valleys, and the deep caverns. I walk much on the banks of the Sorgue, where I meet no one to distract me. I recall the past, I deliberate on the future; and, in this contemplation, I find a resource against my solitude." In the same letter he avows that he could accustom himself to any habitation in the world, except Avignon. At this time he was meditating to recross the Alps.

Early in September, 1352, the Cardinal of Boulogne departed for Paris, in order to negotiate a peace between the Kings of

France and England. Petrarch went to take his leave of him, and asked if he had any orders for Italy, for which he expected soon to set out. The Cardinal told him that he should be only a month upon his journey, and that he hoped to see him at Avignon on his return. He had, in fact, kind views with regard to Petrarch. He wished to procure for him some good establishment in France, and wrote to him upon his route, "Pray do not depart yet. Wait until I return, or, at least, until I write to you on an important affair that concerns yourself." This letter, which, by the way, evinces that our poet's circumstances were not independent of church promotion, changed the plans of Petrarch, who remained at Avignon nearly the whole of the months of September and October.

During this delay, he heard constant reports of the war that was going on between the Genoese and the Venetians. In the spring of the year 1352, their fleets met in the Propontis, and had a conflict almost unexampled, which lasted during two days and a tempestuous night. The Genoese, upon the whole, had the advantage; and, in revenge for the Greeks having aided the Venetians, they made a league with the Turks. The Pope, who had it earnestly at heart to put a stop to this fatal war, engaged the belligerents to send their ambassadors to Avignon, and there to treat for peace. The ambassadors came; but a whole month was spent in negotiations which ended in nothing. Petrarch in vain employed his eloquence, and the Pope his conciliating talents. In these circumstances, Petrarch wrote a letter to the Genoese government, which does infinite credit to his head and his heart. He used every argument that common sense or humanity could suggest to show the folly of the war, but his arguments were thrown away on spirits too fierce for reasoning.

A few days after writing this letter, as the Cardinal of Boulogne had not kept his word about returning to Avignon, and as he heard no news of him, Petrarch determined to set out for Italy. He accordingly started on the 16th of November, 1352; but scarcely had he left his own house, with all his papers, when he was overtaken by heavy falls of rain. At first he thought of going back immediately; but he changed his purpose, and proceeded as far as Cavaillon, which is two leagues from Vaucluse, in order to take leave of his friend, the Bishop of Cabassole. His good friend was very unwell, but received him with joy, and pressed him to pass the night under his roof. That night and all the next day it rained so heavily that Petrarch, more from fear of his books and papers being damaged than from anxiety about his own health, gave up his Italian journey for the present, and, returning to Vaucluse, spent there the rest of November and the whole of December, 1352.

Early in December, Petrarch heard of the death of Clement VI., and this event gave him occasion for more epistles, both against

the Roman court and his enemies, the physicians. Clement's death was ascribed to different causes. Petrarch, of course, imputed it to his doctors. Villani's opinion is the most probable, that he died of a protracted fever. He was buried with great pomp in the church of Nôtre Dame at Avignon; but his remains, after some time, were removed to the abbey of Chaise Dieu, in Auvergne, where his tomb was violated by the Huguenots in 1562. Scandal says that they made a football of his head, and that the Marquis de Courton afterwards converted his skull into a drinking-cup.

It need not surprise us that his Holiness never stood high in the good graces of Petrarch. He was a Limousin, who never loved Italy so much as Gascony, and, in place of re-establishing the holy seat at Rome, he completed the building of the papal palace at Avignon, which his predecessor had begun. These were faults that eclipsed all the good qualities of Clement VI. in the eyes of Petrarch, and, in the sixth of his eclogues, the poet has drawn the character of Clement in odious colours, and, with equal freedom, has described most of the cardinals of his court. Whether there was perfect consistency between this hatred to the Pope and his thinking, as he certainly did for a time, of becoming his secretary, may admit of a doubt. I am not, however, disposed to deny some allowance to Petrarch for his dislike of Clement, who was a voluptuary in private life, and a corrupted ruler of the Church.

Early in May, 1353, Petrarch departed for Italy, and we find him very soon afterwards at the palace of John Visconti of Milan, whom he used to call the greatest man in Italy. This prince, uniting the sacerdotal with the civil power, reigned absolute in Milan. He was master of Lombardy, and made all Italy tremble at his hostility. Yet, in spite of his despotism, John Visconti was a lover of letters, and fond of having literary men at his court. He exercised a cunning influence over our poet, and detained him. Petrarch, knowing that Milan was a troubled city and a stormy court, told the Prince that, being a priest, his vocation did not permit him to live in a princely court, and in the midst of arms. "For that matter," replied the Archbishop, "I am myself an ecclesiastic; I wish to press no employment upon you, but only to request you to remain as an ornament of my court." Petrarch, taken by surprise, had not fortitude to resist his importunities. All that he bargained for was, that he should have a habitation sufficiently distant from the city, and that he should not be obliged to make any change in his ordinary mode of living. The Archbishop was too happy to possess him on these terms.

Petrarch, accordingly, took up his habitation in the western part of the city, near the Vercellina gate, and the church of St. Ambrosio. His house was flanked with two towers, stood behind the city wall, and looked out upon a rich and beautiful country, as

far as the Alps, the tops of which, although it was summer, were still covered with snow. Great was the joy of Petrarch when he found himself in a house near the church of that Saint Ambrosio, for whom he had always cherished a peculiar reverence. He himself tells us that he never entered that temple without experiencing rekindled devotion. He visited the statue of the saint, which was niched in one of the walls, and the stone figure seemed to him to breathe, such was the majesty and tranquillity of the sculpture. Near the church arose the chapel, where St. Augustin, after his victory over his refractory passions, was bathed in the sacred fountain of St. Ambrosio, and absolved from penance for his past life.

All this time, whilst Petrarch was so well pleased with his new abode, his friends were astonished, and even grieved, at his fixing himself at Milan. At Avignon, Socrates, Guido Settimo, and the Bishop of Cavaillon, said among themselves, "What! this proud republican, who breathed nothing but independence, who scorned an office in the papal court as a gilded yoke, has gone and thrown himself into the chains of the tyrant of Italy; this misanthrope, who delighted only in the silence of fields, and perpetually praised a secluded life, now inhabits the most bustling of cities!" At Florence, his friends entertained the same sentiments, and wrote to him reproachfully on the subject. "I would wish to be silent," says Boccaccio, "but I cannot hold my peace. My reverence for you would incline me to hold silence, but my indignation obliges me to speak out. How has Silvanus acted?" (Under the name of Silvanus he couches that of Petrarch, in allusion to his love of rural retirement.) "He has forgotten his dignity; he has forgotten all the language he used to hold respecting the state of Italy, his hatred of the Archbishop, and his love of liberty; and he would imprison the Muses in that court. To whom can we now give our faith, when Silvanus, who formerly pronounced the Visconti a cruel tyrant, has now bowed himself to the yoke which he once so boldly condemned? How has the Visconti obtained this truckling, which neither King Robert, nor the Pope, nor the Emperor, could ever obtain? You will say, perhaps, that you have been ill-used by your fellow-citizens, who have withheld from you your paternal property. I disapprove not your just indignation; but Heaven forbid I should believe that, righteously and honestly, any injury, from whomsoever we may receive it, can justify our taking part against our country. It is in vain for you to allege that you have not incited him to war against our country, nor lent him either your arm or advice. How can you be happy with him, whilst you are hearing of the ruins, the conflagrations, the imprisonments, the deaths, and the rapines, that he spreads around him?"

Petrarch's answers to these and other reproaches which his friends sent to him were cold, vague, and unsatisfactory. He denied that he had sacrificed his liberty; and told Boccaccio that,

after all, it was less humiliating to be subservient to a single tyrant than to be, as he, Boccaccio, was, subservient to a whole tyrannical people. This was an unwise, implied confession on the part of Petrarch that he was the slave of Visconti. Sismondi may be rather harsh in pronouncing Petrarch to have been all his life a Troubadour; but there is something in his friendship with the Lord of Milan that palliates the accusation. In spite of this severe letter from Boccaccio, it is strange, and yet, methinks, honourable to both, that their friendship was never broken.

Levati, in his "*Viaggi di Petrarca*," ascribes the poet's settlement at Milan to his desire of accumulating a little money, not for himself, but for his natural children; and in some of Petrarch's letters, subsequent to this period, there are allusions to his own circumstances which give countenance to this suspicion.

However this may be, Petrarch deceived himself if he expected to have long tranquillity in such a court as that of Milan. He was perpetually obliged to visit the Viscontis, and to be present at every feast that they gave to honour the arrival of any illustrious stranger. A more than usually important visitant soon came to Milan, in the person of Cardinal Egidio Albornoz, who arrived at the head of an army, with a view to restore to the Church large portions of its territory which had been seized by some powerful families. The Cardinal entered Milan on the 14th of September, 1353. John Visconti, though far from being delighted at his arrival, gave him an honourable reception, defrayed all the expenses of his numerous retinue, and treated him magnificently. He went out himself to meet him, two miles from the city, accompanied by his nephews and his courtiers, including Petrarch. Our poet joined the suite of Galeazzo Visconti, and rode near him. The Legate and his retinue rode also on horseback. When the two parties met, the dust, that rose in clouds from the feet of the horses, prevented them from discerning each other. Petrarch, who had advanced beyond the rest, found himself, he knew not how, in the midst of the Legate's train, and very near to him. Salutations passed on either side, but with very little speaking, for the dust had dried their throats.

Petrarch made a backward movement, to regain his place among his company. His horse, in backing, slipped with his hind-legs into a ditch on the side of the road, but, by a sort of miracle, the animal kept his fore-feet for some time on the top of the ditch. If he had fallen back, he must have crushed his rider. Petrarch was not afraid, for he was not aware of his danger; but Galeazzo Visconti and his people dismounted to rescue the poet, who escaped without injury.

The Legate treated Petrarch, who little expected it, with the utmost kindness and distinction, and, granting all that he asked for his friends, pressed him to mention something worthy of his own acceptance. Petrarch replied: "When I ask for my friends,

is it not the same as for myself? Have I not the highest satisfaction in receiving favours for them? I have long put a rein on my own desires. Of what, then, can I stand in need?"

After the departure of the Legate, Petrarch retired to his *rus in urbe*. In a letter dated thence to his friend the Prior of the Holy Apostles, we find him acknowledging feelings that were far distant from settled contentment. "You have heard," he says, "how much my peace has been disturbed, and my leisure broken in upon, by an importunate crowd and by unforeseen occupations. The Legate has left Milan. He was received at Florence with unbounded applause: as for poor me, I am again in my retreat. I have been long free, happy, and master of my time; but I feel, at present, that liberty and leisure are only for souls of consummate virtue. When we are not of that class of beings, nothing is more dangerous for a heart subject to the passions than to be free, idle, and alone. The snares of voluptuousness are *then* more dangerous, and corrupt thoughts gain an easier entrance—above all, love, that seducing tormentor, from whom I thought that I had now nothing more to fear."

From these expressions we might almost conclude that he had again fallen in love; but if it was so, we have no evidence as to the object of his new passion.

During his half-retirement, Petrarch learned news which disturbed his repose. A courier arrived, one night, bringing an account of the entire destruction of the Genoese fleet, in a naval combat with that of the Venetians, which took place on the 19th of August, 1353, near the island of Sardinia. The letters which the poet had written, in order to conciliate those two republics, had proved as useless as the pacificatory efforts of Clement VI. and his successor, Innocent. Petrarch, who had constantly predicted the eventual success of Genoa, could hardly believe his senses, when he heard of the Genoese being defeated at sea. He wrote a letter of lamentation and astonishment on the subject to his friend Guido Settimo. He saw, as it were, one of the eyes of his country destroying the other. The courier, who brought these tidings to Milan, gave a distressing account of the state of Genoa. There was not a family which had not lost one of its members.

Petrarch passed a whole night in composing a letter to the Genoese, in which he exhorted them, after the example of the Romans, never to despair of the republic. His lecture never reached them. On awakening in the morning, Petrarch learned that the Genoese had lost every spark of their courage, and that the day before they had subscribed the most humiliating concessions in despair.

It has been alleged by some of his biographers that Petrarch suppressed his letter to the Genoese from his fear of the Visconti family. John Visconti had views on Genoa, which was a port so

conveniently situated that he naturally coveted the possession of it. He invested it on all sides by land, whilst its other enemies blockaded it by sea; so that the city was reduced to famine. The partizans of John Visconti insinuated to the Genoese that they had no other remedy than to place themselves under the protection of the Prince of Milan. Petrarch was not ignorant of the Visconti's views; and it has been, therefore, suspected that he kept back his exhortatory epistle from his apprehension, that if he had despatched it, John Visconti would have made it the last epistle of his life. The morning after writing it, he found that Genoa had signed a treaty of almost abject submission; after which his exhortation would have been only an insult to the vanquished.

The Genoese were not long in deliberating on the measures which they were to take. In a few days their deputies arrived at Milan, imploring the aid and protection of John Visconti, as well as offering him the republic of Genoa and all that belonged to it. After some conferences, the articles of the treaty were signed; and the Lord of Milan accepted with pleasure the possession that was offered to him.

Petrarch, as a counsellor of Milan, attended these conferences, and condoled with the deputies from Genoa; though we cannot suppose that he approved, in his heart, of the desperate submission of the Genoese in thus throwing themselves into the arms of the tyrant of Italy, who had been so long anxious either to invade them in open quarrel, or to enter their States upon a more amicable pretext. John Visconti immediately took possession of the city of Genoa; and, after having deposed the doge and senate, took into his own hands the reins of government.

Weary of Milan, Petrarch betook himself to the country, and made a temporary residence at the castle of St. Columba, which was now a monastery. This mansion was built in 1164, by the celebrated Frederick Barbarossa. It now belonged to the Carthusian monks of Pavia. Petrarch has given a beautiful description of this edifice, and of the magnificent view which it commands.

Whilst he was enjoying this glorious scenery, he received a letter from Socrates, informing him that he had gone to Vaucluse in company with Guido Settimo, whose intention to accompany Petrarch in his journey to Italy had been prevented by a fit of illness. Petrarch, when he heard of this visit, wrote to express his happiness at their thus honouring his habitation, at the same time lamenting that he was not one of their party. "Repair," he said, "often to the same retreat. Make use of my books, which deplore the absence of their owner, and the death of their keeper" (he alluded to his old servant). "My country-house is the temple of peace, and the home of repose."

From the contents of his letter, on this occasion, it is obvious that he had not yet found any spot in Italy where he could de-

termine on fixing himself permanently; otherwise he would not have left his books behind him.

When he wrote about his books, he was little aware of the danger that was impending over them. On Christmas day a troop of robbers, who had for some time infested the neighbourhood of Vaucluse, set fire to the poet's house, after having taken away everything that they could carry off. An ancient vault stopped the conflagration, and saved the mansion from being entirely consumed by the flames. Luckily, the person to whose care he had left his house—the son of the worthy rustic, lately deceased—having a presentiment of the robbery, had conveyed to the castle a great many books which Petrarch left behind him; and the robbers, believing that there were persons in the castle to defend it, had not the courage to make an attack.

As Petrarch grew old, we do not find him improve in consistency. In his letter, dated the 21st of October, 1353, it is evident that he had a return of his hankering after Vaucluse. He accordingly wrote to his friends, requesting that they would procure him an establishment in the Comtat. Socrates, upon this, immediately communicated with the Bishop of Cavaillon, who did all that he could to obtain for the poet the object of his wish. It appears that the Bishop endeavoured to get for him a good benefice in his own diocese. The thing was never accomplished. Without doubt, the enemies, whom he had excited by writing freely about the Church, and who were very numerous at Avignon, frustrated his wishes.

After some time Petrarch received a letter from the Emperor Charles IV. in answer to one which the poet had expedited to him about three years before. Our poet, of course, did not fail to acknowledge his Imperial Majesty's late-coming letter. He commences his reply with a piece of pleasantry: "I see very well," he says, "that it is as difficult for your Imperial Majesty's despatches and couriers to cross the Alps, as it is for your person and legions." He wonders that the Emperor had not followed his advice, and hastened into Italy, to take possession of the empire. "What consoles me," he adds, "is, that if you do not adopt my sentiments, you at least approve of my zeal; and that is the greatest recompense I could receive." He argues the question with the Emperor with great force and eloquence; and, to be sure, there never was a fairer opportunity for Charles IV. to enter Italy. The reasons which his Imperial Majesty alleges, for waiting a little time to watch the course of events, display a timid and wavering mind.

A curious part of his letter is that in which he mentions Rienzo. "Lately," he says, "we have seen at Rome, suddenly elevated to supreme power, a man who was neither king, nor consul, nor patrician, and who was hardly known as a Roman citizen. Although he was not distinguished by his ancestry, yet he dared

to declare himself the restorer of public liberty. What title more brilliant for an obscure man! Tuscany immediately submitted to him. All Italy followed her example; and Europe and the whole world were in one movement. We have seen the event; it is not a doubtful tale of history. Already, under the reign of the Tribune, justice, peace, good faith, and security, were restored, and we saw vestiges of the golden age appearing once more. In the moment of his most brilliant success, he chose to submit to others. I blame nobody. I wish neither to acquit nor to condemn; but I know what I ought to think. That man had only the title of Tribune. Now, if the name of Tribune could produce such an effect, what might not the title of Cæsar produce!"

Charles did not enter Italy until a year after the date of our poet's epistle; and it is likely that the increasing power of John Visconti made a far deeper impression on his irresolute mind than all the rhetoric of Petrarch. Undoubtedly, the petty lords of Italy were fearful of the vipers of Milan. It was thus that they denominated the Visconti family, in allusion to their coat of arms, which represented an immense serpent swallowing a child, though the device was not their own, but borrowed from a standard which they had taken from the Saracens. The submission of Genoa alarmed the whole of Italy. The Venetians took measures to form a league against the Visconti; and the Princes of Padua, Modena, Mantua, and Verona joined it, and the confederated lords sent a deputation to the Emperor, to beg that he would support them; and they proposed that he should enter Italy at their expense. The opportunity was too good to be lost; and the Emperor promised to do all that they wished. This league gave great trouble to John Visconti. In order to appease the threatening storm, he immediately proposed to the Emperor that he should come to Milan and receive the iron crown; while he himself, by an embassy from Milan, would endeavour to restore peace between the Venetians and the Genoese.

Petrarch appeared to John Visconti the person most likely to succeed in this negotiation, by his eloquence, and by his intimacy with Andrea Dandolo, who governed the republic of Venice. The poet now wished for repose, and journeys began to fatigue him; but the Visconti knew so well how to flatter and manage him, that he could not resist the proposal.

At the commencement of the year 1354, before he departed for Venice, Petrarch received a present, which gave him no small delight. It was a Greek Homer, sent to him by Nichola Sigeros, Prætor of Romagna. Petrarch wrote a long letter of thanks to Sigeros, in which there is a remarkable confession of the small progress which he had made in the Greek language, though at the same time he begs his friend Sigeros to send him copies of Hesiod and Euripides.

A few days afterwards he set out to Venice. He was the chief

of the embassy. He went with confidence, flattering himself that he should find the Venetians more tractable and disposed to peace, both from their fear of John Visconti, and from some checks which their fleet had experienced, since their victory off Sardinia. But he was unpleasantly astonished to find the Venetians more exasperated than humbled by their recent losses, and by the union of the Lord of Milan with the Genoese. All his eloquence could not bring them to accept the proposals he had to offer. Petrarch completely failed in his negotiation, and, after passing a month at Venice, he returned to Milan full of chagrin.

Two circumstances seem to have contributed to render the Venetians intractable. The princes with whom they were leagued had taken into their pay the mercenary troops of Count Lando, which composed a very formidable force; and further, the Emperor promised to appear very soon in Italy at the head of an army.

Some months afterwards, Petrarch wrote to the Doge of Venice, saying, that he saw with grief that the hearts of the Venetians were shut against wise counsels, and he then praises John Visconti as a lover of peace and humanity.

After a considerable interval, Andrea Dandolo answered our poet's letter, and was very sarcastic upon him for his eulogy on John Visconti. At this moment, Visconti was arming the Genoese fleet, the command of which he gave to Paganino Doria, the admiral who had beaten the Venetians in the Propontis. Doria set sail with thirty-three vessels, entered the Adriatic, sacked and pillaged some towns, and did much damage on the Venetian coast. The news of this descent spread consternation in Venice. It was believed that the Genoese fleet were in the roads; and the Doge took all possible precautions to secure the safety of the State.

But Dandolo's health gave way at this crisis, vexed as he was to see the maiden city so humbled in her pride. His constitution rapidly declined, and he died the 8th of September, 1354. He was extremely popular among the Venetians. Petrarch, in a letter written shortly after his death, says of him: "He was a virtuous man, upright, full of love and zeal for his republic; learned, eloquent, wise, and affable. He had only one fault, to wit, that he loved war too much. From this error he judged of a cause by its event. The luckiest cause always appeared to him the most just, which made him often repeat what Scipio Africanus said, and what Lucan makes Cæsar repeat: 'Hæc acies victum factura nocentem.'"

If Dandolo had lived a little longer, and continued his ethical theory of judging a cause by its success, he would have had a hint, from the disasters of Venice, that his own cause was not the most righteous. The Genoese, having surprised the Venetians off the island of Sapienza, obtained one of the completest victories on record. All the Venetian vessels, with the exception of one that

escaped, were taken, together with their admiral. It is believed that, if the victors had gone immediately to Venice, they might have taken the city, which was defenceless, and in a state of consternation; but the Genoese preferred returning home to announce their triumph, and to partake in the public joy. About the time of the Doge's death, another important public event took place in the death of John Visconti. He had a carbuncle upon his forehead, just above the eyebrows, which he imprudently caused to be cut; and, on the very day of the operation, October 4th, 1354, he expired so suddenly as not to have time to receive the sacrament.

John Visconti had three nephews, Matteo, Galeazzo, and Barnabo. They were his heirs, and took possession of his dominions in common, a few days after his death, without any dispute among themselves. The day for their inauguration was fixed, such was the superstition of the times, by an astrologer; and on that day Petrarch was commissioned to make to the assembled people an address suited to the ceremony. He was still in the midst of his harangue, when the astrologer declared with a loud voice that the moment for the ceremony was come, and that it would be dangerous to let it pass. Petrarch, heartily as he despised the false science, immediately stopped his discourse. The astrologer, somewhat disconcerted, replied that there was still a little time, and that the orator might continue to speak. Petrarch answered that he had nothing more to say. Whilst some laughed, and others were indignant at the interruption, the astrologer exclaimed "that the happy moment was come;" on which an old officer carried three white stakes, like the palisades of a town, and gave one to each of the brothers; and the ceremony was thus concluded.

The countries which the three brothers shared amongst them comprehended not only what was commonly called the Duchy, before the King of Sardinia acquired a great part of it, but the territories of Parma, Piacenza, Bologna, Lodi, Bobbio, Pontremoli, and many other places.

There was an entire dissimilarity among the brothers. Matteo hated business, and was addicted to the grossest debaucheries. Barnabo was a monster of tyranny and cruelty. Petrarch, nevertheless, condescended to be godfather to one of Barnabo's sons, and presented the child with a gilt cup. He also composed a Latin poem, on the occasion of his godson being christened by the name of Marco, in which he passes in review all the great men who had borne that name.

Galeazzo was very different from his brothers. He had much kindliness of disposition. One of his greatest pleasures was his intercourse with men of letters. He almost worshipped Petrarch, and it was his influence that induced the poet to settle at Milan. Unlike as they were in dispositions, the brothers, nevertheless, felt how important it was that they should be united, in order to

protect themselves against the league which threatened them; and, at first, they lived in the greatest harmony. Barnabo, the most warlike, was charged with whatever concerned the military. Business of every other kind devolved on Galeazzo. Matteo, as the eldest, presided over all; but, conscious of his incapacity, he took little share in the deliberations of his brothers. Nothing important was done without consulting Petrarch; and this flattering confidence rendered Milan as agreeable to him as any residence could be, consistently with his love of change.

The deaths of the Doge of Venice and of the Lord of Milan were soon followed by another, which, if it had happened some years earlier, would have strongly affected Petrarch. This was the tragic end of Rienzo. Our poet's opinion of this extraordinary man had been changed by his later conduct, and he now took but a comparatively feeble interest in him. Under the pontificate of Clement VI., the ex-Tribune, after his fall, had been consigned to a prison at Avignon. Innocent, the succeeding Pope, thought differently of him from his predecessor, and sent the Cardinal Albornoz into Italy, with an order to establish him at Rome, and to confide the government of the city to him under the title of senator. The Cardinal obeyed the injunction; but after a brief and inglorious struggle with the faction of the Colonnas, Rienzo perished in a popular sedition on the 8th of October, 1354.

War was now raging between the States of the Venetian League and Milan, united with Genoa, when a new actor was brought upon the scene. The Emperor, who had been solicited by one half of Italy to enter the kingdom, but who hesitated from dread of the Lord of Milan, was evidently induced by the intelligence of John Visconti's death to accept this invitation. In October, 1354, his Imperial Majesty entered Italy, with no show of martial preparation, being attended by only three hundred horsemen. On the 10th of November he arrived at Mantua, where he was received as sovereign. There he stopped for some time, before he pursued his route to Rome.

The moment Petrarch heard of his arrival, he wrote to his Imperial Majesty in transports of joy. "You are no longer," he said, "king of Bohemia. I behold in you the king of the world, the Roman emperor, the true Cæsar." The Emperor received this letter at Mantua, and in a few days sent Sacremore de Pomieres, one of his squires, to invite Petrarch to come and meet him, expressing the utmost eagerness to see him. Petrarch could not resist so flattering an invitation; he was not to be deterred even by the unprecedented severity of the frost, and departed from Milan on the 9th of December; but, with all the speed that he could make, was not able to reach Mantua till the 12th.

The Emperor thanked him for having come to him in such dreadful weather, the like of which he had scarcely ever felt, even in Germany. "The Emperor," says Petrarch, "received me in

a manner that partook neither of imperial haughtiness nor of German etiquette. We passed sometimes whole days together, from morning to night, in conversation, as if his Majesty had had nothing else to do. He spoke to me about my works, and expressed a great desire to see them, particularly my 'Treatise on Illustrious Men.' I told him that I had not yet put my last hand to it, and that, before I could do so, I required to have leisure and repose. He gave me to understand that he should be very glad to see it appear under his own patronage, that is to say, dedicated to himself. I said to him, with that freedom of speech which Nature has given me, and which years have fortified, 'Great prince, for this purpose, nothing more is necessary than virtue on your part, and leisure on mine.' He asked me to explain myself. I said, 'I must have time for a work of this nature, in which I propose to include great things in a small space. On your part, labour to deserve that your name should appear at the head of my book. For this end, it is not enough that you wear a crown; your virtues and great actions must place you among the great men whose portraits I have delineated. Live in such a manner, that, after reading the lives of your illustrious predecessors, you may feel assured that your own life shall deserve to be read by posterity.'

"The Emperor showed by a smile that my liberty had not displeased him. I seized this opportunity of presenting him with some imperial medals, in gold and in silver, and gave him a short sketch of the lives of those worthies whose images they bore. He seemed to listen to me with pleasure, and, graciously accepting the medals, declared that he never had received a more agreeable present.

"I should never end if I were to relate to you all the conversations which I held with this prince. He desired me one day to relate the history of my life to him. I declined to do so at first; but he would take no refusal, and I obeyed him. He heard me with attention, and, if I omitted any circumstances from forgetfulness or the fear of being wearisome, he brought them back to my memory. He then asked me what were my projects for the future, and my plans for the rest of my life. 'My intentions are good,' I replied to him, 'but a bad habit, which I cannot conquer, masters my better will, and I resemble a sea beaten by two opposite winds.' 'I can understand that,' he said; 'but I wish to know what is the kind of life that would most decidedly please you?' 'A secluded life,' I replied to him, without hesitation. 'If I could, I should go and seek for such a life at its fountain-head; that is, among the woods and mountains, as I have already done. If I could not go so far to find it, I should seek to enjoy it in the midst of cities.'

"The Emperor differed from me totally as to the benefits of a solitary life. I told him that I had composed a treatise on the

subject. 'I know that,' said the Emperor; 'and if I ever find your book, I shall throw it into the fire.' 'And,' I replied, 'I shall take care that it never falls into your hands.' On this subject we had long and frequent disputes, always seasoned with pleasantry. I must confess that the Emperor combated my system on a solitary life with surprising energy."

Petrarch remained eight days with the King of Bohemia, at Mantua, where he was witness to all his negotiations with the Lords of the league of Lombardy, who came to confer with his Imperial Majesty, in that city, or sent thither their ambassadors. The Emperor, above all things, wished to ascertain the strength of this confederation; how much each principality would contribute, and how much might be the sum total of the whole contribution. The result of this inquiry was, that the forces of the united confederates were not sufficient to make head against the Visconti, who had thirty thousand well-disciplined men. The Emperor, therefore, decided that it was absolutely necessary to conclude a peace. This prince, pacific and without ambition, had, indeed, come into Italy with this intention; and was only anxious to obtain two crowns without drawing a sword. He saw, therefore, with satisfaction that there was no power in Italy to protract hostilities by strengthening the coalition.

He found difficulties, however, in the settlement of a general peace. The Viscontis felt their superiority; and the Genoese, proud of a victory which they had obtained over the Venetians, insisted on hard terms. The Emperor, more intent upon his personal interests than the good of Italy, merely negotiated a truce between the belligerents. He prevailed upon the confederates to disband the company of Count Lando, which cost much and effected little. It cannot be doubted that Petrarch had considerable influence in producing this dismissal, as he always held those troops of mercenaries in abhorrence. The truce being signed, his Imperial Majesty had no further occupation than to negotiate a particular agreement with the Viscontis, who had sent the chief men of Milan, with presents, to conclude a treaty with him. No one appeared more fit than Petrarch to manage this negotiation; and it was universally expected that it should be entrusted to him; but particular reasons, which Petrarch has not thought proper to record, opposed the desires of the Lords of Milan and the public wishes.

The negotiation, nevertheless, was in itself a very easy one. The Emperor, on the one hand, had no wish to make war for the sake of being crowned at Monza. On the other hand, the Viscontis were afraid of seeing the league of their enemies fortified by imperial power. They took advantage of the desire which they observed in Charles to receive this crown without a struggle. They promised not to oppose his coronation, and even to give 50,000 florins for the expense of the ceremony; but they required

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that he should not enter the city of Milan, and that the troops in his suite should be disarmed.

To these humiliating terms Charles subscribed. The affair was completed during the few days that Petrarch spent at Mantua. The Emperor strongly wished that he should be present at the signature of the treaty; and, in fact, though he was not one of the envoys from Milan, the success of the negotiation was generally attributed to him. A rumour to this effect reached even Avignon, where Lælius then was. He wrote to Petrarch to compliment him on the subject. The poet, in his answer, declines an honour that was not due to him.

After the signature of the treaty, Petrarch departed for Milan, where he arrived on Christmas eve, 1354. He there found four letters from Zanobi di Strata, from whom he had not had news for two years. Curious persons had intercepted their letters to each other. Petrarch often complains of this nuisance, which was common at the time.

The Emperor set out from Mantua after the festivities of Christmas. On arriving at the gates of Milan, he was invited to enter by the Viscontis; but Charles declined their invitation, saying, that he would keep the promise which he had pledged. The Viscontis told him politely that they asked his entrance as a favour, and that the precaution respecting his troops by no means extended to his personal presence, which they should always consider an honour. The Emperor entered Milan on the 4th of January, 1355. He was received with the sound of drums, trumpets, and other instruments, that made such a din as to resemble thunder. "His entry," says Villani, "had the air of a tempest rather than of a festivity." Meanwhile the gates of Milan were shut and strictly guarded. Shortly after his arrival, the three brothers came to tender their homage, declaring that they held of the Holy Empire all that they possessed, and that they would never employ their possessions but for his service.

Next day the three brothers, wishing to give the Emperor a high idea of their power and forces, held a grand review of their troops, horse and foot; to which, in order to swell the number, they added companies of the burgesses, well mounted, and magnificently dressed; and they detained his poor Majesty at a window, by way of amusing him, all the time they were making this display of their power. Whilst the troops were defiling, they bade him look upon the six thousand cavalry and ten thousand infantry, which they kept in their pay for his service, adding that their fortresses and castles were well furnished and garrisoned. This spectacle was anything but amusing to the Emperor; but he put a good countenance on the matter, and appeared cheerful and serene. Petrarch scarcely ever quitted his side; and the Prince conversed with him whenever he could snatch time from business, and from the rigid ceremonials that were imposed on him.

On the 6th of January, the festival of Epiphany, Charles received at Milan the iron crown, in the church of St. Ambrosio, from the hands of Robert Visconti, Archbishop of Milan. They gave the Emperor fifty thousand florins in gold, two hundred beautiful horses, covered with cloth bordered with ermine, and six hundred horsemen to escort him to Rome.

The Emperor, who regarded Milan only as a fine large prison, got out of it as soon as he could. Petrarch accompanied him as far as five miles beyond Piacenza, but refused to comply with the Emperor's solicitations to continue with him as far as Rome.

The Emperor departed from Sienna the 28th of March, with the Empress and all his suite. On the 2nd of April he arrived at Rome. During the next two days he visited the churches in pilgrim's attire. On Sunday, which was Easter day, he was crowned, along with his Empress; and, on this occasion, he confirmed all the privileges of the Roman Church, and all the promises that he had made to the Popes Clement VI. and Innocent VI. One of those promises was, that he should not enter Rome except upon the day of his coronation, and that he should not sleep in the city. He kept his word most scrupulously. After leaving the church of St. Peter, he went with a grand retinue to St. John's di Latrana, where he dined, and, in the evening, under pretext of a hunting-party, he went and slept at St. Lorenzo, beyond the walls.

The Emperor arrived at Sienna on the 29th of April. He had there many con erences with the Cardinal Albornoz, to whom he promised troops for the purpose of reducing the tyrants with whom the Legate was at war. His Majesty then went to Pisa, where, on the 21st of May, 1355, a sedition broke out against him, which nearly cost him his life. He left Tuscany without delay, with his Empress and his whole suite, to return to Germany, where he arrived early in June. Many were the affronts he met with on his route, and he recrossed the Alps, as Villani says, "with his dignity humbled, though with his purse well filled."

Lælius, who had accompanied the Emperor as far as Cremona, quitted him at that place, and went to Milan, where he delivered to Petrarch the Prince's valedictory compliments. Petrarch's indignation at his dastardly flight vented itself in a letter to his Imperial Majesty himself, so full of unmeasured rebuke, that it is believed it was never sent.

Shortly after the departure of the Emperor, Petrarch had the satisfaction of hearing, in his own church of St. Ambrosio, the publication of a peace between the Venetians and Genoese. It was concluded at Milan by the mediation of the Visconti, entirely to the advantage of the Genoese, to whom their victory gained in the gulf of Sapienza had given an irresistible superiority. It cost the Venetians two hundred thousand florins. Whilst the

treaty of peace was proceeding, Venice witnessed the sad and strange spectacle of Marino Faliero, her venerable Doge, four-score years old, being dragged to a public execution. Some obscurity still hangs over the true history of this affair. Petrarch himself seems to have understood it but imperfectly, though, from his personal acquaintance with Faliero, and his humane indignation at seeing an old man whom he believed to be innocent, hurled from his seat of power, stripped of his ducal robes, and beheaded like the meanest felon, he inveighs against his execution as a public murder, in his letter on the subject to Guido Settimo.

Petrarch, since his establishment at Milan, had thought it his duty to bring thither his son John, that he might watch over his education. John was at this time eighteen years of age, and was studying at Verona.

The September of 1355 was a critical month for our poet. It was then that the tertian ague commonly attacked him, and this year it obliged him to pass a whole month in bed. He was just beginning to be convalescent, when, on the 9th of September, 1355, a friar, from the kingdom of Naples, entered his chamber, and gave him a letter from Barbato di Salmone. This was a great joy to him, and tended to promote the recovery of his health. Their correspondence had been for a long time interrupted by the wars, and the unsafe state of the public roads. This letter was full of enthusiasm and affection, and was addressed to *Francis Petrarch, the king of poets.* The friar had told Barbato that this title was given to Petrarch over all Italy. Our poet in his answer affected to refuse it with displeasure as far beyond his deserts. "There are only two king-poets," he says, "the one in Greece, the other in Italy. The old bard of Mæonia occupies the former kingdom, the shepherd of Mantua is in possession of the latter. As for me, I can only reign in my transalpine solitude and on the banks of the Sorgue."

Petrarch continued rather languid during autumn, but his health was re-established before the winter.

Early in the year 1356, whilst war was raging between Milan and the Lombard and Ligurian league, a report was spread that the King of Hungary had formed a league with the Emperor and the Duke of Austria, to invade Italy. The Italians in alarm sent ambassadors to the King of Hungary, who declared that he had no hostile intentions, except against the Venetians, as they had robbed him of part of Sclavonia. This declaration calmed the other princes, but not the Viscontis, who knew that the Emperor would never forget the manner in which they had treated him. They thought that it would be politic to send an ambassador to Charles, in order to justify themselves before him, or rather to penetrate into his designs, and no person seemed to be more fit for this commission than Petrarch. Our poet had no great desire to journey into the north, but a charge so agreeable and flattering

made him overlook the fatigue of travelling. He wrote thus to Simonides on the day before his departure:—"They are sending me to the north, at the time when I am sighing for solitude and repose. But man was made for toil: the charge imposed on me does not displease me, and I shall be recompensed for my fatigue if I succeed in the object of my mission. The Lord of Liguria sends me to treat with the Emperor. After having conferred with him on public affairs, I reckon on being able to treat with him respecting my own, and be my own ambassador. I have reproached this prince by letter with his shameful flight from our country. I shall make him the same reproaches, face to face, and *vivâ voce*. In thus using *my own* liberty and his patience, I shall avenge at once Italy, the empire, and my own person. At my return I shall bury myself in a solitude so profound that toil and envy will not be able to find me out. Yet what folly! Can I flatter myself to find any place where envy cannot penetrate?"

Next day he departed with Sacromoro di Pomieres, whose company was a great solace to him. They arrived at Basle, where the Emperor was expected; but they waited in vain for him a whole month. "This prince," says Petrarch, "finishes nothing; one must go and seek him in the depths of barbarism." It was fortunate for him that he stayed no longer, for, a few days after he took leave of Basle, the city was almost wholly destroyed by an earthquake.

Petrarch arrived at Prague in Bohemia towards the end of July, 1356. He found the Emperor wholly occupied with that famous Golden Bull, the provisions of which he settled with the States, at the diet of Nuremberg, and which he solemnly promulgated at another grand diet held at Christmas, in the same year. This Magna Charta of the Germanic constitution continued to be the fundamental law of the empire till its dissolution.

Petrarch made but a short stay at Prague, notwithstanding his Majesty's wish to detain him. The Emperor, though sorely exasperated against the Visconti, had no thoughts of carrying war into Italy. His affairs in Germany employed him sufficiently, besides the embellishment of the city of Prague. At the Bohemian court our poet renewed a very amicable acquaintance with two accomplished prelates, Ernest, Archbishop of Pardowitz, and John Oczkow, Bishop of Olmütz. Of these churchmen he speaks in the warmest terms, and he afterwards corresponded with them. We find him returned to Milan, and writing to Simonides on the 20th of September.

Some days after Petrarch's return from Germany, a courier arrived at Milan with news of the battle of Poitiers, in which eighty thousand French were defeated by thirty thousand Englishmen, and in which King John of France was made prisoner.*

* Most historians relate that the English, at Poitiers, amounted to no more than eight or ten thousand men; but, whether they consisted of eight thousand or thirty thousand, the result was sufficiently glorious for them, and for their brave leader, the Black Prince.

Petrarch was requested by Galeazzo Visconti on this occasion to write for him two condoling letters, one to Charles the Dauphin, and another to the Cardinal of Boulogne. Petrarch was thunderstruck at the calamity of King John, of whom he had an exalted idea. "It is a thing," he says, "incredible, unheard-of, and unexampled in history, that an invincible hero, the greatest king that ever lived, should have been conquered and made captive by an enemy so inferior."

On this great event, our poet composed an allegorical eclogue, in which the King of France, under the name of Pan, and the King of England, under that of Articus, heartily abuse each other. The city of Avignon is brought in with the designation of Faustula. England reproaches the Pope with his partiality for the King of France, to whom he had granted the tithes of his kingdom, by which means he was enabled to levy an army. Articus thus apostrophizes Faustula:—

Ah meretrix obliqua tuens, ait Articus illi—
Immemorem sponsæ cupidus quam mungit adulter!
Hæc tua tota fides, sic sic aliena ministras!
Erubuit nihil ausa palam, nisi mollia pacis
Verba, sed assuetis noctem complexibus egit—

Ah, harlot! squinting with lascivious brows
Upon a hapless wife's adulterous spouse,
Is this thy faith, to waste another's wealth,
The guilty fruit of perfidy and stealth!
She durst not be my foe in open light,
But in my foe's embraces spent the night.

Meanwhile, Marquard, Bishop of Augsburg, vicar of the Emperor in Italy, having put himself at the head of the Lombard league against the Viscontis, entered their territories with the German troops, and was committing great devastations. But the brothers of Milan turned out, beat the Bishop, and took him prisoner. It is evident, from these hostilities of the Emperor's vicar against the Viscontis, that Petrarch's embassy to Prague had not had the desired success. The Emperor, it is true, plainly told him that he had no thoughts of invading Italy in person. And this was true; but there is no doubt that he abetted and secretly supported the enemies of the Milan chiefs. Powerful as the Visconti were, their numerous enemies pressed them hard; and, with war on all sides, Milan was in a critical situation. But Petrarch, whilst war was at the very gates, continued retouching his Italian poetry.

At the commencement of this year, 1356, he received a letter from Avignon, which Socrates, Lælius, and Guido Settimo had jointly written to him. They dwelt all three in the same house, and lived in the most social union. Petrarch made them a short reply, in which he said, "Little did I think that I should ever envy those who inhabit Babylon. Nevertheless, I wish that I were with you in that house of yours, inaccessible to the pestilent air of the infamous city. I regard it as an elysium in the midst of Avernus."

MILAN CATHEDRAL.

At this time, Petrarch received a diploma that was sent to him by John, Bishop of Olmütz, Chancellor of the Empire, in which diploma the Emperor created him a count palatine, and conferred upon him the rights and privileges attached to this dignity. These, according to the French abridger of the History of Germany, consisted in creating doctors and notaries, in legitimatizing the bastards of citizens, in crowning poets, in giving dispensations with respect to age, and in other things. To this diploma sent to Petrarch was attached a bull, or capsule of gold. On one side was the impression of the Emperor, seated on his throne, with an eagle and lion beside him; on the other was the city of Rome, with its temples and walls. The Emperor had added to this dignity privileges which he granted to very few, and the Chancellor, in his communication, used very flattering terms. Petrarch says, in his letter of thanks, "I am exceedingly grateful for the signal distinction which the Emperor has graciously vouchsafed to me, and for the obliging terms with which you have seasoned the communication. I have never sought in vain for anything from his Imperial Majesty and yourself. But I wish not for your gold."

In the summer of 1357, Petrarch, wishing to screen himself from the excessive heat, took up his abode for a time on the banks of the Adda at Garignano, a village three miles distant from Milan, of which he gives a charming description. "The village," he says, "stands on a slight elevation in the midst of a plain, surrounded on all sides by springs and streams, not rapid and noisy like those of Vaucluse, but clear and modest. They wind in such a manner, that you know not either whither they are going, or whence they have come. As if to imitate the dances of the nymphs, they approach, they retire, they unite, and they separate alternately. At last, after having formed a kind of labyrinth, they all meet, and pour themselves into the same reservoir." John Visconti had chosen this situation whereon to build a Carthusian monastery. This was what tempted Petrarch to found here a little establishment. He wished at first to live within the walls of the monastery, and the Carthusians made him welcome to do so; but he could not dispense with servants and horses, and he feared that the drunkenness of the former might trouble the silence of the sacred retreat. He therefore hired a house in the neighbourhood of the holy brothers, to whom he repaired at all hours of the day. He called this house his *Linterno*, in memory of Scipio Africanus, whose country-house bore that name. The peasants, hearing him call the domicile *Linterno*, corrupted the word into *Inferno*, and, from this mispronunciation, the place was often jocularly called by that name.

Petrarch was scarcely settled in this agreeable solitude, when he received a letter from his friend Settimo, asking him for an exact and circumstantial detail of his circumstances and mode of living, of his plans and occupations, of his son John, &c. His

answer was prompt, and is not uninteresting. "The course of my life," he says, "has always been uniform ever since the frost of age has quenched the ardour of my youth, and particularly that fatal flame which so long tormented me. But what do I say?" he continues; "it is a celestial dew which has produced this extinction. Though I have often changed my place of abode, I have always led nearly the same kind of life. What it is, none knows better than yourself. I once lived beside you for two years. Call to mind how I was then occupied, and you will know my present occupations. You understand me so well that you ought to be able to guess, not only what I am doing, but what I am dreaming.

"Like a traveller, I am quickening my steps in proportion as I approach the term of my course. I read and write night and day; the one occupation refreshes me from the fatigue of the other. These are my employments—these are my pleasures. My tasks increase upon my hands; one begets another; and I am dismayed when I look at what I have undertaken to accomplish in so short a space as the remainder of my life. * * * My health is good; my body is so robust that neither ripe years, nor grave occupations, nor abstinence, nor penance, can totally subdue that *kicking ass* on whom I am constantly making war. I count upon the grace of Heaven, without which I should infallibly fall, as I fell in other times. All my reliance is on Christ. With regard to my fortune, I am exactly in a just mediocrity, equally distant from the two extremes * * * *

"I inhabit a retired corner of the city towards the west. Their ancient devotion attracts the people every Sunday to the church of St. Ambrosio, near which I dwell. During the rest of the week, this quarter is a desert.

"Fortune has changed nothing in my nourishment, or my hours of sleep, except that I retrench as much as possible from indulgence in either. I lie in bed for no other purpose than to sleep, unless I am ill. I hasten from bed as soon as I am awake, and pass into my library. This takes place about the middle of the night, save when the nights are shortest. I grant to Nature nothing but what she imperatively demands, and which it is impossible to refuse her.

"Though I have always loved solitude and silence, I am a great gossip with my friends, which arises, perhaps, from my seeing them but rarely. I atone for this loquacity by a year of taciturnity. I mutely recall my parted friends by correspondence. I resemble that class of people of whom Seneca speaks, who seize life in detail, and not by the gross. The moment I feel the approach of summer, I take a country-house a league distant from town, where the air is extremely pure. In such a place I am at present, and here I lead my wonted life, more free than ever from the wearisomeness of the city. I have abundance of everything; the peasants vie with each other in bringing me fruit, fish, ducks,

and all sorts of game. There is a beautiful Carthusian monastery in my neighbourhood, where, at all hours of the day, I find the innocent pleasures which religion offers. In this sweet retreat I feel no want but that of my ancient friends. In these I was once rich; but death has taken away some of them, and absence robs me of the remainder. Though my imagination represents them, still I am not the less desirous of their real presence. There would remain but few things for me to desire, if fortune would restore to me but two friends, such as you and Socrates. I confess that I flattered myself a long time to have had you both with me. But, if you persist in your rigour, I must console myself with the company of my religionists. Their conversation, it is true, is neither witty nor profound, but it is simple and pious. Those good priests will be of great service to me both in life and death. I think I have now said enough about myself, and, perhaps, more than enough. You ask me about the state of my fortune, and you wish to know whether you may believe the rumours that are abroad about my riches. It is true that my income is increased; but so, also, proportionably, is my outlay. I am, as I have always been, neither rich nor poor. Riches, they say, make men poor by multiplying their wants and desires; for my part, I feel the contrary; the more I have the less I desire. Yet, I suppose, if I possessed great riches, they would have the same effect upon me as upon other people.

"You ask news about my son. I know not very well what to say concerning him. His manners are gentle, and the flower of his youth holds out a promise, though what fruit it may produce I know not. I think I may flatter myself that he will be an honest man. He has talent; but what avails talent without study! He flies from a book as he would from a serpent. Persuasions, caresses, and threats are all thrown away upon him as incitements to study. I have nothing wherewith to reproach myself; and I shall be satisfied if he turns out an honest man, as I hope he will. Themistocles used to say that he liked a man without letters better than letters without a man."

In the month of August, 1357, Petrarch received a letter from Benintendi, the Chancellor of Venice, requesting him to send a dozen elegiac verses to be engraved on the tomb of Andrea Dandolo. The children of the Doge had an ardent wish that our poet should grant them this testimony of his friendship for their father. Petrarch could not refuse the request, and composed fourteen verses, which contain a sketch of the great actions of Dandolo. But they were verses of command, which the poet made in despite of the Muses and of himself.

In the following year, 1358, Petrarch was almost entirely occupied with his treatise, entitled, "De Remediis utriusque Fortunæ," (A Remedy against either extreme of Fortune.) This made a great noise when it appeared. Charles V. of France had it tran-

scribed for his library, and translated; and it was afterwards translated into Italian and Spanish.

Petrarch returned to Milan, and passed the autumn at his house, the Linterno, where he met with an accident, that for some time threatened dangerous consequences. He thus relates it, in a letter to his friend, Neri Morandi:—"I have a great volume of the epistles of Cicero, which I have taken the pains to transcribe myself, for the copyists understand nothing. One day, when I was entering my library, my gown got entangled with this large book, so that the volume fell heavily on my left leg, a little above the heel. By some fatality, I treated the accident too lightly. I walked, I rode on horseback, according to my usual custom; but my leg became inflamed, the skin changed colour, and mortification began to appear. The pain took away my cheerfulness and sleep. I then perceived that it was foolish courage to trifle with so serious an accident. Doctors were called in. They feared at first that it would be necessary to amputate the limb; but, at last, by means of regimen and fomentation, the afflicted member was put into the way of healing. It is singular that, ever since my infancy, my misfortunes have always fallen on this same left leg. In truth, I have always been tempted to believe in destiny; and why not, if, by the word destiny, we understand Providence?"

As soon as his leg was recovered, he made a trip to Bergamo. There was in that city a jeweller named Enrico Capri, a man of great natural talents, who cherished a passionate admiration for the learned, and above all for Petrarch, whose likeness was pictured or statued in every room of his house. He had copies made at a great expense of everything that came from his pen. He implored Petrarch to come and see him at Bergamo. "If he honours my household gods," he said, "but for a single day with his presence, I shall be happy all my life, and famous through all futurity." Petrarch consented, and on the 13th of October, 1358, the poet was received at Bergamo with transports of joy. The governor of the country and the chief men of the city wished to lodge him in some palace; but Petrarch adhered to his jeweller, and would not take any other lodging but with his friend.

A short time after his return to Milan, Petrarch had the pleasure of welcoming to his house John Boccaccio, who passed some days with him. The author of the Decamerone regarded Petrarch as his literary master. He owed him a still higher obligation, according to his own statement; namely, that of converting his heart, which, he says, had been frivolous and inclined to gallantry, and even to licentiousness, until he received our poet's advice. He was about forty-five years old when he went to Milan. Petrarch made him sensible that it was improper, at his age, to lose his time in courting women; that he ought to employ it more seriously, and turn towards heaven the devotion which he misplaced on earthly beauties. This conversation is the subject

of one of Boccaccio's eclogues, entitled, "Philostropos." His eclogues are in the style of Petrarch, obscure and enigmatical, and the subjects are muffled up under emblems and Greek names.

After spending some days with Petrarch, that appeared short to them both, Boccaccio, pressed by business, departed about the beginning of April, 1359. The great novelist soon afterwards sent to Petrarch from Florence a beautiful copy of Dante's poem, written in his own hand, together with some indifferent Latin verses, in which he bestows the highest praises on the author of the Inferno. At that time, half the world believed that Petrarch was jealous of Dante's fame; and the rumour was rendered plausible by the circumstance—for which he has accounted very rationally—that he had not a copy of Dante in his library.

In the month of May in this year, 1359, a courier from Bohemia brought Petrarch a letter from the Empress Anne, who had the condescension to write to him with her own hand to inform him that she had given birth to a daughter. Great was the joy on this occasion, for the Empress had been married five years, but, until now, had been childless. Petrarch, in his answer, dated the 23rd of the same month, after expressing his sense of the honour which her Imperial Majesty had done him, adds some commonplaces, and seasons them with his accustomed pedantry. He pronounces a grand eulogy on the numbers of the fair sex who had distinguished themselves by their virtues and their courage. Among these he instances Isis, Carmenta, the mother of Evander, Sappho, the Sybils, the Amazons, Semiramis, Tomiris, Cleopatra, Zenobia, the Countess Matilda, Lucretia, Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, Martia, Portia, and Livia. The Empress Anne was no doubt highly edified by this muster-roll of illustrious women; though some of the heroines, such as Lucretia, might have bridled up at their chaste names being classed with that of Cleopatra.

Petrarch repaired to Linterno, on the 1st of October, 1359; but his stay there was very short. The winter set in sooner than usual. The constant rains made his rural retreat disagreeable, and induced him to return to the city about the end of the month.

On rising, one morning, soon after his return to Milan, he found that he had been robbed of everything valuable in his house, excepting his books. As it was a domestic robbery, he could accuse nobody of it but his son John and his servants, the former of whom had returned from Avignon. On this, he determined to quit his house at St. Ambrosio, and to take a small lodging in the city; here, however, he could not live in peace. His son and servants quarrelled every day, in his very presence, so violently that they exchanged blows. Petrarch then lost all patience, and turned the whole of his pugnacious inmates out of doors. His son John had now become an arrant debauchee; and

it was undoubtedly to supply his debaucheries that he pillaged his own father. He pleaded strongly to be readmitted to his home; but Petrarch persevered for some time in excluding him, though he ultimately took him back.

It appears from one of Petrarch's letters, that many people at Milan doubted his veracity about the story of the robbery, alleging that it was merely a pretext to excuse his inconstancy in quitting his house at St. Ambrosio; but that he was capable of accusing his own son on false grounds is a suspicion which the whole character of Petrarch easily repels. He went and settled himself in the monastery of St. Simplician, an abbey of the Benedictines of Monte Cassino, pleasantly situated without the walls of the city.

He was scarcely established in his new home at St. Simplician's, when Galeazzo Visconti arrived in triumph at Milan, after having taken possession of Pavia. The capture of this city much augmented the power of the Lords of Milan; and nothing was wanting to their satisfaction but the secure addition to their dominions of Bologna, to which Barnabo Visconti was laying siege, although John of Olegea had given it up to the Church, in consideration of a pension and the possession of the city of Fermo.

This affair had thrown the court of Avignon into much embarrassment, and the Pope requested Nicholas Acciajuoli, Grand Seneschal of Naples, who had been sent to the Papal city by his Neapolitan Majesty, to return by way of Milan, and there negotiate a peace between the Church and Barnabo Visconti. Acciajuoli reached Milan at the end of May, very eager to see Petrarch, of whom he had heard much, without having yet made his acquaintance. Petrarch describes their first interview in a letter to Zanobi da Strada, and seems to have been captivated by the gracious manners of the Grand Seneschal.

With all his popularity, the Seneschal was not successful in his mission. When the Seneschal's proposals were read to the impetuous Barnabo, he said, at the end of every sentence, "Io voglio Bologna." It is said that Petrarch detached Galeazzo Visconti from the ambitious projects of his brother; and that it was by our poet's advice that Galeazzo made a separate peace with the Pope; though, perhaps, the true cause of his accommodation with the Church was his being in treaty with France, and soliciting the French monarch's daughter, Isabella, in marriage for his son Giovanni. After this marriage had been celebrated with magnificent festivities, Petrarch was requested by Galeazzo to go to Paris, and to congratulate the unfortunate King John upon his return to his country. Our poet had a transalpine prejudice against France; but he undertook this mission to its capital, and was deeply touched by its unfortunate condition.

If the aspect of the country in general was miserable, that of

the capital was still worse. "Where is Paris," exclaims Petrarch, "that metropolis, which, though inferior to its reputation, was, nevertheless, a great city?" He tells us that its streets were covered with briars and grass, and that it looked like a vast desert.

Here, however, in spite of its desolate condition, Petrarch witnessed the joy with which the Parisians received their King John and the Dauphin Charles. The King had not been well educated, yet he respected literature and learned men. The Dauphin was an accomplished prince; and our poet says that he was captivated by his modesty, sense, and information.

Petrarch arrived at Milan early in March, 1361, bringing letters from King John and his son the Dauphin, in which those princes entreat the two Lords of Milan to persuade Petrarch by every means to come and establish himself at their court. No sooner had he refused their pressing invitations, than he received an equally earnest request from the Emperor to accept his hospitality at Prague.

At this period, it had given great joy in Bohemia that the Empress had produced a son, and that the kingdom now possessed an heir apparent. His Imperial Majesty's satisfaction made him, for once, generous, and he distributed rich presents among his friends. Nor was our poet forgotten on this occasion. The Emperor sent him a gold embossed cup of admirable workmanship, accompanied by a letter, expressing his high regard, and repeating his request that he would pay him a visit in Germany. Petrarch returned him a letter of grateful thanks, saying: "Who would not be astonished at seeing transferred to my use a vase consecrated by the mouth of Cæsar? But I will not profane the sacred gift by the common use of it. It shall adorn my table only on days of solemn festivity." With regard to the Imperial invitation, he concludes a long apology for not accepting it immediately, but promising that, as soon as the summer was over, if he could find a companion for the journey, he would go to the court of Prague, and remain as long as it pleased his Majesty, since the presence of Cæsar would console him for the absence of his books, his friends, and his country. This epistle is dated July 17th, 1361.

Petrarch quitted Milan during this year, a removal for which various reasons are alleged by his biographers, though none of them appear to me quite satisfactory.

He had now a new subject of grief to descant upon. The Marquis of Montferrat, unable to contend against the Visconti, applied to the Pope for assistance. He had already made a treaty with the court of London, by which it was agreed that a body of English troops were to be sent to assist the Marquis against the Visconti. They entered Italy by Nice. It was the first time that our countrymen had ever entered the Saturnian land. They did

no credit to the English character for humanity, but ravaged lands and villages, killing men and violating women. Their general appellation was the bulldogs of England. What must have been Petrarch's horror at these unkennelled hounds! In one of his letters he vents his indignation at their atrocities; but, by-and-by, in the same epistle, he glides into his bookworm habit of apostrophizing the ancient heroes of Rome, Brutus, Camillus, and God knows how many more!

The plague now again broke out in Italy; and the English and other predatory troops contributed much to spread its ravages. It extended to many places; but most of all it afflicted Milan.

It is probable that these disasters were among the causes of Petrarch's leaving Milan. He settled at Padua, when the plague had not reached it. At this time, Petrarch lost his son John. Whether he died at Milan or at Padua is not certain, but, wherever he died, it was most probably of the plague. John had not quite attained his twenty-fourth year.

In the same year, 1361, he married his daughter Francesca, now near the age of twenty, to Francesco di Brossano, a gentleman of Milan. Petrarch speaks highly of his son-in-law's talents, and of the mildness of his character. Boccaccio has drawn his portrait in the most pleasing colours. Of the poet's daughter, also, he tells us, "that without being handsome, she had a very agreeable face, and much resembled her father." It does not seem that she inherited his genius; but she was an excellent wife, a tender mother, and a dutiful daughter. Petrarch was certainly pleased both with her and with his son-in-law; and, if he did not live with the married pair, he was, at least, near them, and much in their society.

When our poet arrived at Padua, Francesco di Carrara, the son of his friend Jacopo, reigned there in peace and alone. He had inherited his father's affection for Petrarch. Here, too, was his friend Pandolfo Malatesta, one of the bravest condottieri of the fourteenth century, who had been driven away from Milan by the rage and jealousy of Barnabo.

The plague, which still continued to infest Southern Europe in 1362, had even in the preceding year deprived our poet of his beloved friend Socrates, who died at Avignon. "He was," says Petrarch, "of all men the dearest to my heart. His sentiments towards me never varied during an acquaintance of thirty-one years."

The plague and war rendered Italy at this time so disagreeable to Petrarch, that he resolved on returning to Vaucluse. He, therefore, set out from Padua for Milan, on the 10th of January, 1362, reckoning that when the cold weather was over he might depart from the latter place on his route to Avignon. But when he reached Milan, he found that the state of the country would not permit him to proceed to the Alps.

THE LIBRARY OF ST MARK, ST MARK'S PLACE, VENICE.

The Emperor of Germany now sent Petrarch a third letter of invitation to come and see him, which our poet promised to accept; but alleged that he was prevented by the impossibility of getting a safe passage. Boccaccio, hearing that Petrarch meditated a journey to the far North, was much alarmed, and reproached him for his intention of dragging the Muses into Sarmatia, when Italy was the true Parnassus.

In June, 1362, the plague, which had begun its ravages at Padua, chased Petrarch from that place, and he took the resolution of establishing himself at Venice, which it had not reached. The course of the pestilence, like that of the cholera, was not general, but unaccountably capricious. Villani says that it acted like hail, which will desolate fields to the right and left, whilst it spares those in the middle. The war had not permitted our poet to travel either to Avignon or into Germany. The plague had driven him out of Milan and Padua. "I am not flying from death," he said, "but seeking repose."

Having resolved to repair to Venice, Petrarch as usual took his books along with him. From one of his letters to Boccaccio, it appears that it was his intention to bestow his library on some religious community, but, soon after his arrival at Venice, he conceived the idea of offering this treasure to the Venetian Republic. He wrote to the Government that he wished the blessed Evangelist, St. Mark, to be the heir of those books, on condition that they should all be placed in safety, that they should neither be sold nor separated, and that they should be sheltered from fire and water, and carefully preserved for the use and amusement of the learned and noble in Venice. He expressed his hopes, at the same time, that the illustrious city would acquire other trusts of the same kind for the good of the public, and that the citizens who loved their country, the nobles above all, and even strangers, would follow his example in bequeathing books to the church of St. Mark, which might one day contain a great collection similar to those of the ancients.

The procurators of the church of St. Mark having offered to defray the expense of lodging and preserving his library, the republic decreed that our poet's offer did honour to the Venetian state. They assigned to Petrarch for his own residence a large palace, called the Two Towers, formerly belonging to the family of Molina. The mansion was very lofty, and commanded a prospect of the harbour. Our poet took great pleasure in this view, and describes it with vivid interest. "From this port," he says, "I see vessels departing, which are as large as the house I inhabit, and which have masts taller than its towers. These ships resemble a mountain floating on the sea; they go to all parts of the world amidst a thousand dangers; they carry our wines to the English, our honey to the Scythians, our saffron, our oils, and our linen to the Syrians, Armenians, Persians, and

Arabians; and, wonderful to say, convey our wood to the Greeks and Egyptians. From all these countries they bring back in return articles of merchandize, which they diffuse over all Europe. They go even as far as the Tanais. The navigation of our seas does not extend farther north; but, when they have arrived there, they quit their vessels, and travel on to trade with India and China; and, after passing the Caucasus and the Ganges, they proceed as far as the Eastern Ocean."

It is natural to suppose that Petrarch took all proper precautions for the preservation of his books; nevertheless, they are not now to be seen at Venice. Tomasini tells us that they had been placed at the top of the church of St. Mark, that he demanded a sight of them, but that he found them almost entirely spoiled, and some of them even petrified.

Whilst Petrarch was forming his new establishment at Venice, the news arrived that Pope Innocent VI. had died on the 12th of September. "He was a good, just, and simple man," says the continuator of Nangis. A simple man he certainly was, for he believed Petrarch to be a sorcerer on account of his reading Virgil. Innocent was succeeded in the pontificate, to the surprise of all the world, by William Grimoard, abbot of St. Victor at Marseilles, who took the title of Urban V. The Cardinals chose him, though he was not of their Sacred College, from their jealousy lest a pope should be elected from the opposite party of their own body. Petrarch rejoiced at his election, and ascribed it to the direct interference of Heaven. De Sade says that the new Pope desired Petrarch to be the apostolic secretary, but that he was not to be tempted by a gilded chain.

About this time Petrarch received news of the death of Azzo Correggio, one of his dearest friends, whose widow and children wrote to him on this occasion, the latter telling him that they regarded him as a father.

Boccaccio came to Venice to see Petrarch in 1363, and their meeting was joyous. They spent delightfully together the months of June, July, and August, 1363. Boccaccio had not long left him, when, in the following year, our poet heard of the death of his friend Lælius, and his tears were still fresh for his loss, when he received another shock in being bereft of Simonides. It requires a certain age and degree of experience to appreciate this kind of calamity, when we feel the desolation of losing our accustomed friends, and almost wish ourselves out of life that we may escape from its solitude. Boccaccio returned to Florence early in September, 1363.

In 1364, peace was concluded between Barnabo Visconti and Urban V. Barnabo having refused to treat with the Cardinal Albornoz, whom he personally hated, his Holiness sent the Cardinal Androine de la Roche to Italy as his legate. Petrarch repaired to Bologna to pay his respects to the new representative

of the Pope. He was touched by the sad condition in which he found that city, which had been so flourishing when he studied at its university. "I seem," he says, "to be in a dream when I see the once fair city desolated by war, by slavery, and by famine. Instead of the joy that once reigned here, sadness is everywhere spread, and you hear only sighs and wailings in place of songs. Where you formerly saw troops of girls dancing, there are now only bands of robbers and assassins."

Lucchino del Verme, one of the most famous condottieri of his time, had commanded troops in the service of the Visconti, at whose court he made the acquaintance of Petrarch. Our poet invited him to serve the Venetians in the war in which they were engaged with the people of Candia. Lucchino went to Venice whilst Petrarch was absent, reviewed the troops, and embarked for Candia on board the fleet, which consisted of thirty galleys and eight large vessels. Petrarch did not return to Venice till the expedition had sailed. He passed the summer in the country, having at his house one of his friends, Barthelemi di Pappazuori, Bishop of Christi, whom he had known at Avignon, and who had come purposely to see him. One day, when they were both at a window which overlooked the sea, they beheld one of the long vessels which the Italians call a galeazza entering the harbour. The green branches with which it was decked, the air of joy that appeared among the mariners, the young men crowned with laurel, who, from the prow, saluted the standard of their country—everything betokened that the galeazza brought good news. When the vessel came a little nearer, they could perceive the captured colours of their enemies suspended from the poop, and no doubt could be entertained that a great victory had been won. The moment that the sentinel on the tower had made the signal of a vessel entering the harbour, the people flocked thither in crowds, and their joy was even beyond expectation when they learned that the rebellion had been totally crushed, and the island reduced to obedience. The most magnificent festivals were given at Venice on this occasion.

Shortly after these Venetian fêtes, we find our poet writing a long letter to Boccaccio, in which he gives a curious and interesting description of the Jongleurs of Italy. He speaks of them in a very different manner from those pictures that have come down to us of the Provençal Troubadours. The latter were at once poets and musicians, who frequented the courts and castles of great lords, and sang their praises. Their strains, too, were sometimes satirical. They amused themselves with different subjects, and wedded their verses to the sound of the harp and other instruments. They were called Troubadours from the word *trobar*, "to invent." They were original poets, of the true minstrel breed, similar to those whom Bishop Percy ascribes to England in the olden time, but about the reality of whom, as a

professional body, Ritson has shown some cause to doubt. Of the Italian Jongleurs, Petrarch gives us a humble notion. "They are a class," he says, "who have little wit, but a great deal of memory, and still more impudence. Having nothing of their own to recite, they snatch at what they can get from others, and go about to the courts of princes to declaim verses, in the vulgar tongue, which they have got by heart. At those courts they insinuate themselves into the favour of the great, and get subsistence and presents. They seek their means of livelihood, that is, the verses they recite, among the best authors, from whom they obtain, by dint of solicitation, and even by bribes of money, compositions for their rehearsal. I have often repelled their importunities, but sometimes, touched by their entreaties, I have spent hours in composing productions for them. I have seen them leave me in rags and poverty, and return, some time afterwards, clothed in silks, and with purses well furnished, to thank me for having relieved them."

In the course of the same amusing correspondence with Boccaccio, which our poet maintained at this period, he gives an account of an atheist and blasphemer at Venice, with whom he had a long conversation. It ended in our poet seizing the infidel by the mantle, and ejecting him from his house with unceremonious celerity. This conclusion of their dialogue gives us a higher notion of Petrarch's piety than of his powers of argument.

Petrarch went to spend the autumn of 1365 at Pavia, which city Galeazzo Visconti made his principal abode. To pass the winter till Easter, our poet returned first to Venice, and then to Padua, according to his custom, to do the duties of his canonry. It was then that his native Florence, wishing to recall a man who did her so much honour, thought of asking for him from the Pope the canonry of either Florence or Fiesole. Petrarch fully appreciated the shabby kindness of his countrymen. A republic that could afford to be lavish in all other expenses, limited their bounty towards him to the begging of a canonicate for him from his Holiness, though Florence had confiscated his father's property. But the Pope had other views for him, and had actually appointed him to the canonry of Carpentras, when a false rumour of his death unhappily induced the Pontiff to dispose not only of that living, but of Parma and others which he had resigned to indigent friends.

During the February of 1366 there was great joy in the house of Petrarch, for his daughter, Francesca, the wife of Francesco di Brossano, gave birth to a boy, whom Donato degli Albanzani, a peculiarly-favoured friend of the poet's, held over the baptismal font, whilst he was christened by the name of Francesco.

Meanwhile, our poet was delighted to hear of reformatiens in the Church, which signalized the commencement of Urban V.'s pontificate. After some hesitation, Petrarch ventured to write a

strong advice to the Pope to remove the holy seat from Avignon to Rome. His letter is long, zealous, superstitious, and, as usual, a little pedantic. The Pope did not need this epistle to spur his intentions as to replacing the holy seat at Rome; but it so happened that he did make the removal no very long time after Petrarch had written to him.

On the 20th of July, 1366, our poet rose, as was his custom, to his matin devotions, and reflected that he was precisely then entering on his sixty-third year. He wrote to Boccaccio on the subject. He repeats the belief, at that time generally entertained, that the sixty-third year of a man's life is its most dangerous crisis. It was a belief connected with astrology, and a superstitious idea of the influence of numbers; of course, if it retains any attention at present, it must subsist on practical observation: and I have heard sensible physicians, who had no faith in the influence of the stars, confess that they thought that time of life, commonly called the grand climacteric, a critical period for the human constitution.

In May, 1367, Pope Urban accomplished his determination to remove his court from Avignon in spite of the obstinacy of his Cardinals; but he did not arrive at Rome till the month of October. He was joyously received by the Romans; and, in addition to other compliments, had a long letter from Petrarch, who was then at Venice. Some days after the date of this letter, our poet received one from Galeazzo Visconti. The Pope, it seems, wished, at whatever price, to exterminate the Visconti. He thundered this year against Barnabo with a terrible bull, in which he published a crusade against him. Barnabo, to whom, with all his faults, the praise of courage cannot be denied, brought down his troops from the Po, in order to ravage Mantua, and to make himself master of that city. Galeazzo, his brother, less warlike, thought of employing negotiation for appeasing the storm; and he invited Petrarch to Pavia, whither our poet arrived in 1368. He attempted to procure a peace for the Visconti, but was not successful.

It was not, however, solely to treat for a peace with his enemies that Galeazzo drew our poet to his court. He was glad that he should be present at the marriage of his daughter Violante with Lionel, Duke of Clarence, son of Edward III. of England. The young English prince, followed by many nobles of our land, passed through France, and arrived at Milan on the 14th of May. His nuptials took place about a month later. At the marriage-dinner Petrarch was seated at the table where there were only princes, or nobles of the first rank. It is a curious circumstance that Froissart, so well known as an historian of England, came at this time to Milan, in the suite of the Duke of Clarence, and yet formed no acquaintance with our poet. Froissart was then only about thirty years old. It might have been hoped that the two

geniuses would have become intimate friends; but there is no trace of their having even spoken to each other. Petrarch's neglect of Froissart may not have been so wonderful; but it is strange that the latter should not have been ambitious to pay his court to the greatest poet then alive. It is imaginable, however, that Petrarch, with all his natural gentleness, was proud in his demeanour to strangers; and if so, Froissart was excusable for an equally-proud reserve.

In the midst of the fêtes that were given for the nuptials of the English prince, Petrarch received news of the death of his grandchild. This little boy had died at Pavia, on the very day of the marriage of Lionel and Violante, when only two years and four months old. Petrarch caused a marble mausoleum to be erected over him, and twelve Latin lines of his own composition to be engraved upon it. He was deeply touched by the loss of his little grandson. "This child," he says, "had a singular resemblance to me, insomuch that any one who had not seen its mother would have taken me for its father."

A most interesting letter from Boccaccio to our poet found Petrarch at Pavia, whither he had retired from Milan, wearied with the marriage fêtes. The summer season was now approaching, when he was accustomed to be ill; and he had, besides, got by the accident of a fall a bad contusion on his leg. He was anxious to return to Padua, and wished to embark on the Po. But war was abroad; the river banks were crowded with troops of the belligerent parties; and no boatmen could be found for some time who would go with him for love or money. At last, he found the master of a vessel bold enough to take him aboard. Any other vessel would have been attacked and pillaged; but Petrarch had no fear; and, indeed, he was stopped in his river passage only to be loaded with presents. He arrived in safety at Padua, on the 9th of June, 1368.

The Pope wished much to see our poet at Rome; but Petrarch excused himself on account of his health and the summer season, which was always trying to him. But he promised to repair to his Holiness as soon as his health should permit, not to ask benefices of the holy father, but only his blessing. During the same year, we find Petrarch complaining often and painfully of his bodily infirmities. In a letter to Coluccio Salutati, he says: —"Age, which makes others garrulous, only makes me silent. When young, I used to write many and long letters. At present, I write only to my particular friends, and even to them very short letters." Petrarch was now sixty-four years old. He had never seen Pope Urban V., as he tells us himself; but he was very desirous of seeing him, and of seeing Rome adorned by the two great luminaries of the world, the Pope and the Emperor. Pope Urban, fearing the heats of Italy, to which he was not accustomed, had gone to pass the dog-days at Monte-Fiascone. When he

returned to Rome, in October, on his arrival at the Colline gate, near the church of St. Angelo, he found the Emperor, who was waiting for him. The Emperor, the moment he saw his Holiness, dismounted from his horse, took the reins of that of the Pope, and conducted him on foot to the church of St. Peter. As to this submission of civil to ecclesiastical dignity, different opinions were entertained, even at Rome; and the wiser class of men disapproved of it. Petrarch's opinion on the subject is not recorded; but, during this year, there is no proof that he had any connection with the Emperor; and my own opinion is that he did not approve of his conduct. It is certain that Petrarch condemned the Pope's entering Rome at the head of 2000 soldiery. "The Roman Pontiff," he remarks, "should trust to his dignity and to his sanctity, when coming into our capital, and not to an army with their swords and cuirasses. The cross of Jesus is the only standard which he ought to rear. Trumpets and drums were out of place. It would have been enough to have sung hallelujahs."

Petrarch, in his letter to Boccaccio, in the month of September, says that he had got the fever; and he was still so feeble that he was obliged to employ the hand of a stranger in writing to him. He indites as follows:—"I have had the fever for forty days. It weakened me so much that I could not go to my church, though it is near my house, without being carried. I feel as if my health would never be restored. My constitution seems to be entirely worn out." In another letter to the Cardinal Cabassole, who informed him of the Pope's wish to see him, he says: "His Holiness does me more honour than I deserve. It is to you that I owe this obligation. Return a thousand thanks to the holy father in your own name and in mine." The Pope was so anxious to see Petrarch that he wrote to him with his own hand, reproaching him for refusing his invitation. Our poet, after returning a second apology, passed the winter in making preparations for this journey; but before setting out he thought proper to make his will. It was written with his own hand at Padua.

In his testament he forbids weeping for his death, justly remarking that tears do no good to the dead, and may do harm to the living. He asks only prayers and alms to the poor who will pray for him. "As for my burial," he says, "let it be made as my friends think fit. What signifies it to me where my body is laid?" He then makes some bequests in favour of the religious orders; and he founds an anniversary in his own church of Padua, which is still celebrated every year on the 9th of July.

Then come his legacies to his friends. He bequeathes to the Lord of Padua his picture of the Virgin, painted by Giotto; "the beauty of which," he says, "is little known to the ignorant, though the masters of art will never look upon it without admiration."

To Donato di Prato Vecchio, master of grammar at Venice, he leaves all the money that he had lent him. He bequeathes the horses he may have at his death to Bonzanello di Vigoncia and Lombardo da Serigo, two friends of his, citizens of Padua, wishing them to draw lots for the choice of the horses. He avows being indebted to Lombardo da Serigo 134 golden ducats, advanced for the expenses of his house. He also bequeathes to the same person a goblet of silver gilt (undoubtedly the same which the Emperor Charles had sent him in 1362). He leaves to John Abucheta, warden of his church, his great breviary, which he bought at Venice for 100 francs, on condition that, after his death, this breviary shall remain in the sacristy for the use of the future priests of the church. To John Boccaccio he bequeathes 50 gold florins of Florence, to buy him a winter-habit for his studies at night. "I am ashamed," he adds, "to leave so small a sum to so great a man;" but he entreats his friends in general to impute the smallness of their legacies to that of his fortune. To Tomaso Bambasi, of Ferrara, he makes a present of his good lute, that he may make use of it in singing the praises of God. To Giovanni Dandi, physician of Padua, he leaves 50 ducats of gold, to buy a gold ring, which he may wear in remembrance of him.

He appoints Francesco da Brossano, citizen of Milan, his heir, and desires him, not only as his heir, but as his dear son, to divide into two parts the money he should find—the one for himself, the other for the person to whom it was assigned. "It would seem by this," says De Sade, "that Petrarch would not mention his daughter by name in a public will, because she was not born in marriage." Yet his shyness to name her makes it singular that he should style Brossano his son. In case Brossano should die before him, he appoints Lombardo da Serigo his eventual heir. De Sade considers the appointment as a deed of trust. With respect to his little property at Vaucluse, he leaves it to the hospital in that diocese. His last bequest is to his brother Gherardo, a Carthusian of Montrieux. He desires his heir to write to him immediately after his decease, and to give him the option of a hundred florins of gold, payable at once, or by five or ten florins every year.

A few days after he had made this will, he set out for Rome. The pleasure with which he undertook the journey made him suppose that he could support it. But when he reached Ferrara he fell down in a fit, in which he continued thirty hours, without sense or motion; and it was supposed that he was dead. The most violent remedies were used to restore him to consciousness, but he says that he felt them no more than a statue.

Nicholas d' Este II., the son of Obizzo, was at that time Lord of Ferrara, a friend and admirer of Petrarch. The physicians thought him dead, and the whole city was in grief. The news spread to Padua, Venice, Milan, and Pavia. Crowds came from

Sam.l Front. J.T. Willmore

FERRARA.

all parts to his burial. Ugo d' Este, the brother of Nicholas, a young man of much merit, who had an enthusiastic regard for Petrarch, paid him unremitting attention during his illness. He came three or four times a day to see him, and sent messengers incessantly to inquire how he was. Our poet acknowledged that he owed his life to the kindness of those two noblemen.

When Petrarch was recovering, he was impatient to pursue his route, though the physicians assured him that he could not get to Rome alive. He would have attempted the journey in spite of their warnings, if his strength had seconded his desires, but he was unable to sit his horse. They brought him back to Padua, laid on a soft seat on a boat. His unhoped-for return caused as much surprise as joy in that city, where he was received by its lords and citizens with as much joy as if he had come back from the other world. To re-establish his health, he went to a village called Arquà, situated on the slope of a hill famous for the salubrity of its air, the goodness of its wines, and the beauty of its vineyards. An everlasting spring reigns there, and the place commands a view of pleasingly-scattered villas. Petrarch built himself a house on the high ground of the village, and he added to the vines of the country a great number of other fruit-trees.

He had scarcely fixed himself at Arquà, when he put his last hand to a work which he had begun in the year 1367. To explain the subject of this work, and the circumstances which gave rise to it, I think it necessary to state what was the real cause of our poet's disgust at Venice. He appeared there, no doubt, to lead an agreeable life among many friends, whose society was delightful to him. But there reigned in this city what Petrarch thought licentiousness in conversation. The most ignorant persons were in the habit of undervaluing the finest geniuses. It fills one with regret to find Petrarch impatient of a liberty of speech, which, whatever its abuses may be, cannot be suppressed, without crushing the liberty of human thought. At Venice, moreover, the philosophy of Aristotle was much in vogue, if doctrines could be called Aristotelian, which had been disfigured by commentators, and still worse garbled by Averroes. The disciples of Averroes at Venice insisted on the world having been co-eternal with God, and made a joke of Moses and his book of Genesis. "Would the eternal architect," they said, "remain from all eternity doing nothing? Certainly not! The world's youthful appearance is owing to its revolutions, and the changes it has undergone by deluges and conflagrations." "Those free-thinkers," Petrarch tells us, "had a great contempt for Christ and his Apostles, as well as for all those who did not bow the knee to the Stagirite." They called the doctrines of Christianity fables, and hell and heaven the tales of asses. Finally, they believed that Providence takes no care of anything under the region of the moon. Four young Venetians of this sect had attached themselves to Petrarch,

who endured their society, but opposed their opinions. His opposition offended them, and they resolved to humble him in the public estimation. They constituted themselves a tribunal to try his merits: they appointed an advocate to plead for him, and they concluded by determining that he was a good man, but illiterate!

This affair made a great stir at Venice. Petrarch seems at first to have smiled with sensible contempt at so impertinent a farce; but will it be believed that his friends, and among them Donato and Boccaccio, advised and persuaded him to treat it seriously, and to write a book about it? Petrarch accordingly put his pen to the subject. He wrote a treatise, which he entitled "De sui ipsius et aliorum Ignorantia —" (On his own Ignorance, and on that of others).

Petrarch had himself formed the design of confuting the doctrines of Averroes; but he engaged Ludovico Marsili, an Augustine monk of Florence, to perform the task. This monk, in Petrarch's opinion, possessed great natural powers, and our poet exhorts him to write against that rabid animal (Averroes) who barks with so much fury against Christ and his Apostles. Unfortunately, the rabid animals who write against the truths we are most willing to believe are difficult to be killed.

The good air of the Euganean mountains failed to re-establish the health of Petrarch. He continued ill during the summer of 1370. John di Dondi, his physician, or rather his friend, for he would have no physician, would not quit Padua without going to see him. He wrote to him afterwards that he had discovered the true cause of his disease, and that it arose from his eating fruits, drinking water, and frequent fastings. His medical adviser, also, besought him to abstain from all salted meats, and raw fruits, or herbs. Petrarch easily renounced salted provisions, "but, as to fruits," he says, "Nature must have been a very unnatural mother to give us such agreeable food, with such delightful hues and fragrance, only to seduce her children with poison covered over with honey."

Whilst Petrarch was thus ill, he received news very unlikely to forward his recovery. The Pope took a sudden resolution to return to Avignon. That city, in concert with the Queen of Naples and the Kings of France and Arragon, sent him vessels to convey him to Avignon. Urban gave as a reason for his conduct the necessity of making peace between the crowns of France and England, but no one doubted that the love of his own country, the difficulty of inuring himself to the climate of Rome, the enmity and rebellious character of the Italians, and the importunities of his Cardinals, were the true cause of his return. He was received with great demonstrations of joy; but St. Bridget had told him that if he went to Avignon he should die soon afterwards, and it so happened that her prophecy was fulfilled, for the Pope not long after his arrival in Provence was seized with a

mortal illness, and died on the 19th of December, 1370. In the course of his pontificate, he had received two singular honours. The Emperor of the West had performed the office of his equerry, and the Emperor of the East abjured schism, acknowledging him as primate of the whole Christian Church.

The Cardinals chose as Urban's successor a man who did honour to their election, namely, Pietro Rogero, nephew of Clement VI., who took the name of Gregory XI. Petrarch knew him, he had seen him at Padua in 1367, when the Cardinal was on his way to Rome, and rejoiced at his accession. The new Pontiff caused a letter to be written to our poet, expressing his wish to see him, and to be of service to him.

In a letter written about this time to his friend Francesco Bruni, we perceive that Petrarch is not quite so indifferent to the good things of the world as the general tenor of his letters would lead us to imagine. He writes:—"Were I to say that I want means to lead the life of a canon, I should be wrong, but when I say that my single self have more acquaintances than all the chapter put together, and, consequently, that I am put to more expenses in the way of hospitality, then I am right. This embarrassment increases every day, and my resources diminish. I have made vain efforts to free myself from my difficulties. My prebend, it is true, yields me more bread and wine than I need for my own consumption. I can even sell some of it. But my expenses are very considerable. I have never less than two horses, usually five or six amanuenses. I have only three at this moment. It is because I could find no more. Here it is easier to find a painter than an amanuensis. I have a venerable priest, who never quits me when I am at church. Sometimes when I count upon dining with him alone, behold, a crowd of guests will come in. I must give them something to eat, and I must tell them amusing stories, or else pass for being proud or avaricious.

"I am desirous to found a little oratory for the Virgin Mary; and shall do so, though I should sell or pawn my books. After that I shall go to Avignon, if my strength permits. If it does not, I shall send one of my people to the Cardinal Cabassole, and to you, that you may attempt to accomplish what I have often wished, but uselessly, as both you and he well know. If the holy father wishes to stay my old age, and put me into somewhat better circumstances, as he appears to me to wish, and as his predecessor promised me, the thing would be very easy. Let him do as it may please him, much, little, or nothing; I shall be always content. Only let him not say to me as Clement VI. used to do, 'ask what you wish for.' I cannot do so, for several reasons. In the first place, I do not myself know exactly what would suit me. Secondly, if I were to demand some vacant place, it might be given away before my demand reached the feet of his Holiness. Thirdly, I might make a request that might displease him. His

extreme kindness might pledge him to grant it; and I should be made miserable by obtaining it.

"Let him give me, then, whatever he pleases, without waiting for my petitioning for it. Would it become me, at my years, to be a solicitor for benefices, having never been so in my youth? I trust, in this matter, to what you may do with the Cardinal Sabina. You are the only friends who remain to me in that country. These thirty years the Cardinal has given me marks of his affection and good-will. I am about to write to him a few words on the subject; and I shall refer him to this letter, to save my repeating to him those miserable little details with which I should not detain you, unless it seemed to be necessary."

A short time afterwards, Petrarch heard, with no small satisfaction, of the conduct of Cardinal Cabassole, at Perugia. When the Cardinal came to take leave of the Pope the evening before his departure for that city, he said, "Holy father, permit me to recommend Petrarch to you, on account of my love for him. He is, indeed, a man unique upon earth—a true phœnix." Scarcely was he gone, when the Cardinal of Boulogne, making pleasantries on the word phœnix, turned into ridicule both the praises of Cabassole and him who was their object. Francesco Bruni, in writing to Petrarch about the kindness of the one Cardinal, thought it unnecessary to report the pleasantries of the other. But Petrarch, who had heard of them from another quarter, relates them himself to Bruni, and says:—"I am not astonished. This man loved me formerly, and I was equally attached to him. At present he hates me, and I return his hatred. Would you know the reason of this double change? It is because he is the enemy of truth, and I am the enemy of falsehood; he dreads the liberty which inspires me, and I detest the pride with which he is swollen. If our fortunes were equal, and if we were together in a free place, I should not call myself a phœnix; for that title ill becomes me; but he would be an owl. Such people as he imagine, on account of riches ill-acquired, and worse employed, that they are at liberty to say what they please."

In the letter which Bruni wrote to Petrarch, to apprize him of Cabassole's departure, and of what he had said to the Pope in his favour, he gave him notice of the promotion of twelve new cardinals, whom Gregory had just installed, with a view to balance the domineering authority of the others. "And I fear," he adds, "that the Pope's obligations to satiate those new and hungry comers may retard the effects of his good-will towards you." "Let his Holiness satiate them," replied Petrarch; "let him appease their thirst, which is more than the Tagus, the Pactolus, and the ocean itself could do—I agree to it; and let him not think of me. I am neither famished nor thirsty. I shall content myself with their leavings, and with what the holy father may think meet to give, if he deigns to think of me."

Bruni was right. The Pope, beset by applications on all hands, had no time to think of Petrarch. Bruni for a year discontinued his correspondence. His silence vexed our poet. He wrote to Francesco, saying, "You do not write to me, because you cannot communicate what you would wish. You understand me ill, and you do me injustice. I desire nothing, and I hope for nothing, but an easy death. Nothing is more ridiculous than an old man's avarice; though nothing is more common. It is like a voyager wishing to heap up provisions for his voyage when he sees himself approaching the end of it. The holy father has written me a most obliging letter: is not that sufficient for me? I have not a doubt of his good-will towards me, but he is encompassed by people who thwart his intentions. Would that those persons could know how much I despise them, and how much I prefer my mediocrity to the vain grandeur which renders them so proud!" After a tirade against his enemies in purple, evidently some of the Cardinals, he reproaches Bruni for having dwelt so long for lucre in the ill-smelling Avignon; he exhorts him to leave it, and to come and end his days at Florence. He says that he does not write to the Pope for fear of appearing to remind him of his promises. "I have received," he adds, "his letter and Apostolic blessing; I beg you to communicate to his Holiness, in the clearest manner, that I wish for no more."

From this period Petrarch's health was never re-established. He was languishing with wishes to repair to Perugia, and to see his dear friend the Cardinal Cabassole. At the commencement of spring he mounted a horse, in order to see if he could support the journey; but his weakness was such that he could only ride a few steps. He wrote to the Cardinal expressing his regrets, but seems to console himself by recalling to his old friend the days they had spent together at Vaucluse, and their long walks, in which they often strayed so far, that the servant who came to seek for them and to announce that dinner was ready could not find them till the evening.

It appears from this epistle that our poet had a general dislike to cardinals. "You are not," he tells Cabassole, "like most of your brethren, whose heads are turned by a bit of red cloth so far as to forget that they are mortal men. It seems, on the contrary, as if honours rendered you more humble, and I do not believe that you would change your mode of thinking if they were to put a crown on your head." The good Cardinal, whom Petrarch paints in such pleasing colours, could not accustom himself to the climate of Italy. He had scarcely arrived there when he fell ill, and died on the 26th of August in the same year.

Of all the friends whom Petrarch had had at Avignon, he had now none left but Mattheus le Long, Archdeacon of Liege, with whom his ties of friendship had subsisted ever since they had studied together at Bologna. From him he received a letter on

the 5th of January, 1372, and in his answer, dated the same day at Padua, he gives this picture of his condition, and of the life which he led:—

"You ask about my condition—it is this. I am, thanks to God, sufficiently tranquil, and free, unless I deceive myself, from all the passions of my youth. I enjoyed good health for a long time, but for two years past I have become infirm. Frequently, those around me have believed me dead, but I live still, and pretty much the same as you have known me. I could have mounted higher; but I wished not to do so, since every elevation is suspicious. I have acquired many friends and a good many books: I have lost my health and many friends; I have spent some time at Venice. At present I am at Padua, where I perform the functions of canon. I esteem myself happy to have quitted Venice, on account of that war which has been declared between that Republic and the Lord of Padua. At Venice I should have been suspected: here I am caressed. I pass the greater part of the year in the country, which I always prefer to the town. I repose, I write, I think; so you see that my way of life and my pleasures are the same as in my youth. Having studied so long, it is astonishing that I have learnt so little. I hate nobody, I envy nobody. In that first season of life which is full of error and presumption, I despised all the world except myself. In middle life, I despised only myself. In my aged years, I despise all the world, and myself most of all. I fear only those whom I love. I desire only a good end. I dread a company of valets like a troop of robbers. I should have none at all, if my age and weakness permitted me. I am fain to shut myself up in concealment, for I cannot endure visits; it is an honour which displeases and wears me out. Amidst the Euganean hills I have built a small but neat mansion, where I reckon on passing quietly the rest of my days, having always before my eyes my dead or absent friends. To conceal nothing from you, I have been sought after by the Pope, the Emperor, and the King of France, who have given me pressing invitations, but I have constantly declined them, preferring my liberty to everything."

In this letter, Petrarch speaks of a sharp war that had arisen between Venice and Padua. A Gascon, named Rainier, who commanded the troops of Venice, having thrown bridges over the Brenta, established his camp at Abano, whence he sent detachments to ravage the lands of Padua. Petrarch was in great alarm; for Arquà is only two leagues from Abano. He set out on the 15th of November for Padua, to put himself and his books under protection. A friend at Verona wrote to him, saying, "Only write your name over the door of your house, and fear nothing; it will be your safeguard." The advice, it is hardly necessary to say, was absurd. Among the pillaging soldiery there were thousands who could not have read the

poet's name if they had seen it written, and of those who were accomplished enough to read, probably many who would have thought Petrarch as fit to be plundered as another man. Petrarch, therefore, sensibly replied, "I should be sorry to trust them. Mars respects not the favourites of the Muses; I have no such idea of my name, as that it would shelter me from the furies of war." He was even in pain about his domestics, whom he left at Arquà, and who joined him some days afterwards.

Pandolfo Malatesta, learning what was passing in the Paduan territory, and the danger to which Petrarch was exposed, sent to offer him his horses, and an escort to conduct him to Pesaro, which was at that time his residence. He was Lord of Pesaro and Fossombrone. The envoy of Pandolfo found our poet at Padua, and used every argument to second his Lord's invitation; but Petrarch excused himself on account of the state of his health, the insecurity of the highways, and the severity of the weather. Besides, he said that it would be disgraceful to him to leave Padua in the present circumstances, and that it would expose him to the suspicion of cowardice, which he never deserved.

Pandolfo earnestly solicited from Petrarch a copy of his Italian works. Our poet in answer says to him, "I have sent to you by your messenger these trifles which were the amusement of my youth. They have need of all your indulgence. It is shameful for an old man to send you things of this nature; but you have earnestly asked for them, and can I refuse you anything? With what grace could I deny you verses which are current in the streets, and are in the mouth of all the world, who prefer them to the more solid compositions that I have produced in my riper years?" This letter is dated at Padua, on the 4th of January, 1373. Pandolfo Malatesta died a short time after receiving it.

Several Powers interfered to mediate peace between Venice and Padua, but their negotiations ended in nothing, the spirits of both belligerents were so embittered. The Pope had sent as his nuncio for this purpose a young professor of law, named Uguzzone da Thiene, who was acquainted with Petrarch. He lodged with our poet when he came to Padua, and he communicated to him some critical remarks which had been written at Avignon on Petrarch's letter to Pope Urban V., congratulating him on his return to Rome. A French monk of the order of St. Bernard passed for the author of this work. As it spoke irreverently of Italy, it stirred up the bile of Petrarch, and made him resume the pen with his sickly hand. His answer to the offensive production glows with anger, and is harsh even to abusiveness. He declaims, as usual, in favour of Italy, which he adored, and against France, which he disliked.

After a suspension the war was again conducted with fury, till at last a peace was signed at Venice on the 11th of September,

1373. The conditions were hard and humiliating to the chief of Padua. The third article ordained that he should come in person, or send his son, to ask pardon of the Venetian Republic for the insults he had offered her, and swear inviolable fidelity to her. The Carrara sent his son Francesco Novello, and requested Petrarch to accompany him. Our poet had no great wish to do so, and had too good an excuse in the state of his health, which was still very fluctuating, but the Prince importuned him, and he thought that he could not refuse a favour to such a friend.

Francesco Novello, accompanied by Petrarch, and by a great suite of Paduan gentlemen, arrived at Venice on the 27th of September, where they were well received, especially the poet. On the following day the chiefs of the maiden city gave him a public audience. But, whether the majesty of the Venetian Senate affected Petrarch, or his illness returned by accident, so it was that he could not deliver the speech which he had prepared, for his memory failed him. But the universal desire to hear him induced the Senators to postpone their sitting to the following day. He then spoke with energy, and was extremely applauded. Franceso Novello begged pardon, and took the oath of fidelity.

Francesco da Carrara loved and revered Petrarch, and used to go frequently to see him without ceremony in his small mansion at Arquà. The Prince one day complained to him that he had written for all the world excepting himself. Petrarch thought long and seriously about what he should compose that might please the Carrara; but the task was embarrassing. To praise him directly might seem sycophantish and fulsome to the Prince himself. To censure him would be still more indelicate. To escape the difficulty, he projected a treatise on the best mode of governing a State, and on the qualities required in the person who has such a charge. This subject furnished occasion for giving indirect praises, and, at the same time, for pointing out some defects which he had remarked in his patron's government.

It cannot be denied that there are some excellent maxims respecting government in this treatise, and that it was a laudable work for the fourteenth century. But since that period the subject has been so often discussed by minds of the first order, that we should look in vain into Petrarch's Essay for any truths that have escaped their observation. Nature offers herself in virgin beauty to the primitive poet. But abstract truth comes not to the philosopher, till she has been tried by the test of time.

After his return from Venice, Petrarch only languished. A low fever, that undermined his constitution, left him but short intervals of health, but made no change in his mode of life; he passed the greater part of the day in reading or writing. It does not appear, however, that he composed any work in the course of the year 1374. A few letters to Boccaccio are all that can be

traced to his pen during that period. Their date is not marked in them, but they were certainly written shortly before his death. None of them possess any particular interest, excepting that always in which he mentions the Decameron.

It seems at first sight not a little astonishing that Petrarch, who had been on terms of the strictest friendship with Boccaccio for twenty-four years, should never till now have read his best work. Why did not Boccaccio send him his Decameron long before? The solution of this question must be made by ascribing the circumstance to the author's sensitive respect for the austerely moral character of our poet.

It is not known by what accident the Decameron fell into Petrarch's hands, during the heat of the war between Venice and Padua. Even then his occupations did not permit him to peruse it thoroughly; he only slightly ran through it, after which he says in his letter to Boccaccio, "I have not read your book with sufficient attention to pronounce an opinion upon it; but it has given me great pleasure. That which is too free in the work is sufficiently excusable for the age at which you wrote it, for its elegant language, for the levity of the subject, for the class of readers to whom it is suited. Besides, in the midst of much gay and playful matter, several grave and pious thoughts are to be found. Like the rest of the world, I have been particularly struck by the beginning and the end. The description which you give of the state of our country during the plague, appeared to me most true and most pathetic. The story which forms the conclusion made so vivid an impression on me, that I wished to get it by heart, in order to repeat it to some of my friends."

Petrarch, perceiving that this touching story of Griseldis made an impression on all the world, had an idea of translating it into Latin, for those who knew not the vulgar tongue. The following anecdote respecting it is told by Petrarch himself:—"One of his friends, a man of knowledge and intellect, undertook to read it to a company; but he had hardly got into the midst of it, when his tears would not permit him to continue. Again he tried to resume the reading, but with no better success."

Another friend from Verona having heard what had befallen the Paduan, wished to try the same experiment; he took up the composition, and read it aloud from beginning to end without the smallest change of voice or countenance, and said, in returning the book, "It must be owned that this is a touching story, and I should have wept, also, if I believed it to be true; but it is clearly a fable. There never was and there never will be such a woman as Griseldis."*

This letter, which Petrarch sent to Boccaccio, accompanied by

* This is the story of the patient Grisel, which is familiar in almost every language.

a Latin translation of his story, is dated, in a MS. of the French King's library, the 8th of June, 1374. It is perhaps, the last letter which he ever wrote. He complains in it of "mischievous people, who opened packets to read the letters contained in them, and copied what they pleased. Proceeding in their licence, they even spared themselves the trouble of transcription, and kept the packets themselves." Petrarch, indignant at those violators of the rights and confidence of society, took the resolution of writing no more, and bade adieu to his friends and epistolary correspondence, "Valete amici, valete epistolæ."

Petrarch died a very short time after despatching this letter. His biographers and contemporary authors are not agreed as to the day of his demise, but the probability seems to be that it was the 18th of July. Many writers of his life tell us that he expired in the arms of Lombardo da Serigo, whom Philip Villani and Gianozzo Manetti make their authority for an absurd tradition connected with his death. They pretend that when he breathed his last several persons saw a white cloud, like the smoke of incense, rise to the roof of his chamber, where it stopped for some time and then vanished, a miracle, they add, clearly proving that his soul was acceptable to God, and ascended to heaven. Giovanni Manzini gives a different account. He says that Petrarch's people found him in his library, sitting with his head reclining on a book. Having often seen him in this attitude, they were not alarmed at first; but, soon finding that he exhibited no signs of life, they gave way to their sorrow. According to Domenico Aretino, who was much attached to Petrarch, and was at that time at Padua, so that he may be regarded as good authority, his death was occasioned by apoplexy.

The news of his decease made a deep impression throughout Italy; and, in the first instance, at Arquà and Padua, and in the cities of the Euganean hills. Their people hastened in crowds to pay their last duties to the man who had honoured their country by his residence. Francesco da Carrara repaired to Arquà with all his nobility to assist at his obsequies. The Bishop went thither with his chapter and with all his clergy, and the common people flocked together to share in the general mourning.

The body of Petrarch, clad in red satin, which was the dress of the canons of Padua, supported by sixteen doctors on a bier covered with cloth of gold bordered with ermine, was carried to the parish church of Arquà, which was fitted up in a manner suitable to the ceremony. After the funeral oration had been pronounced by Bonaventura da Praga, of the order of the hermits of St. Augustin, the corpse was interred in a chapel which Petrarch himself had erected in the parish church in honour of the Virgin. A short time afterwards, Francesco Brossano, having caused a tomb of marble to be raised on four pillars opposite

to the same church, transferred the body to that spot, and engraved over it an epitaph in some bad Latin lines, the rhyming of which is their greatest merit. In the year 1637, Paul Valdezucchi, proprietor of the house and grounds of Petrarch at Arquà, caused a bust of bronze to be placed above his mausoleum.

In the year 1630, his monument was violated by some sacrilegious thieves, who carried off some of his bones for the sake of selling them. The Senate of Venice severely punished the delinquents, and by their decree upon the subject testified their deep respect for the remains of this great man.

The moment the poet's will was opened, Brossano, his heir, hastened to forward to his friends the little legacies which had been left them; among the rest his fifty florins to Boccaccio. The answer of that most interesting man is characteristic of his sensibility, whilst it unhappily shows him to be approaching the close of his life (for he survived Petrarch but a year), in pain and extreme debility. "My first impulse," he says to Brossano, "on hearing of the decease of my master," so he always denominated our poet, "was to have hastened to his tomb to bid him my last adieu, and to mix my tears with yours. But ever since I lectured in public on the Divina Commedia of Dante, which is now ten months, I have suffered under a malady which has so weakened and changed me, that you would not recognise me. I have totally lost the stoutness and complexion which I had when you saw me at Venice. My leanness is extreme, my sight is dim, my hands shake, and my knees totter, so that I can hardly drag myself to my country-house at Certaldo, where I only languish. After reading your letter, I wept a whole night for my dear master, not on his own account, for his piety permits us not to doubt that he is now happy, but for myself and for his friends whom he has left in this world, like a vessel in a stormy sea without a pilot. By my own grief I judge of yours, and of that of Tullia, my beloved sister, your worthy spouse. I envy Arquà the happiness of holding deposited in her soil him whose heart was the abode of the Muses, and the sanctuary of philosophy and eloquence. That village, scarcely known to Padua, will henceforth be famed throughout the world. Men will respect it like Mount Pausilippo for containing the ashes of Virgil, the shore of the Euxine for possessing the tomb of Ovid, and Smyrna for its being believed to be the burial-place of Homer." Among other things, Boccaccio inquires what has become of his divine poem entitled Africa, and whether it had been committed to the flames, a fate with which Petrarch, from excess of delicacy, often threatened his compositions.

From this letter it appears that this epic, to which he owed the laurel and no small part of his living reputation, had not yet been published, with the exception of thirty-four verses, which had appeared at Naples through the indiscretion of Barbatus. Boccaccio said that Petrarch kept it continually locked up, and

had been several times inclined to burn it. The author of the Decameron himself did not long survive his master; he died the 21st of December, 1375.

Petrarch so far succeeded in clearing the road to the study of antiquities, as to deserve the title which he justly retains of the restorer of classical learning; nor did his enthusiasm for ancient monuments prevent him from describing them with critical taste. He gave an impulse to the study of geography by his Itinerarium Syriacum. That science had been partially revived in the preceding century, by the publication of Marco Polo's travels, and journeys to distant countries had been accomplished more frequently than before, not only by religious missionaries, but by pilgrims who travelled from purely rational curiosity: but both of these classes of travellers, especially the religionists, dealt profusely in the marvellous; and their falsehoods were further exaggerated by copyists, who wished to profit by the sale of MSS. describing their adventures. As an instance of the doubtful wonders related by wayfaring men, may be noticed what is told of Octorico da Pordenone, who met, at Trebizond, with a man who had trained four thousand partridges to follow him on journeys for three days together, who gathered around like chickens when he slept, and who returned home after he had sold to the Emperor as many of them as his imperial majesty chose to select.

His treatise, "De Remediis utriusque Fortunæ" (On the Remedies for both Extremes of Fortune) was one of his great undertakings in the solitude of Vaucluse, though it was not finished till many years afterwards, when it was dedicated to Azzo Correggio. Here he borrows, of course, largely from the ancients; at the same time he treats us to some observations on human nature sufficiently original to keep his work from the dryness of plagiarism.

His treatise on "A Solitary Life" was written as an apology for his own love of retirement—retirement, not solitude, for Petrarch had the social feeling too strongly in his nature to desire a perfect hermitage. He loved to have a friend now and then beside him, to whom he might say how sweet is solitude. Even his deepest retirement in the "shut-up valley" was occasionally visited by dear friends, with whom his discourse was so interesting that they wandered in the woods so long and so far, that the servant could not find them to announce that their dinner was ready. In his rapturous praise of living alone, our poet, therefore, says more than he sincerely meant; he liked retirement, to be sure, but then it was with somebody within reach of him, like the young lady in Miss Porter's novel, who was fond of solitude, and walked much in Hyde Park by herself, with her footman behind her.

His treatise, "De Otio Religiosorum," was written in 1353, after an agreeable visit to his brother, who was a monk, It is a commendation of the monastic life. He may be found, I dare

say, to exaggerate the blessing of that mode of life which, in proportion to our increasing activity and intelligence, has sunk in the estimation of Protestant society, so that we compare the whole monkish fraternity with the drones in a hive, an ignavum pecus, whom the other bees are right in expelling.

Though I shall never pretend to be the translator of Petrarch, I recoil not, after writing his Life, from giving a sincere account of the impression which his poetry produces on my mind. I have studied the Italian language with assiduity, though perhaps at a later period of my life than enables the ear to be *perfectly* sensitive to its harmony, for it is in youth, nay, almost in childhood alone, that the melody and felicitous expressions of any tongue can touch our deepest sensibility; but still I have studied it with pains—I believe I can thoroughly appreciate Dante; I can perceive much in Petrarch that is elevated and tender; and I approach the subject unconscious of the slightest splenetic prejudice.

I demur to calling him the first of modern poets who refined and dignified the language of love. Dante had certainly set him the example. It is true that, compared with his brothers of classical antiquity in love-poetry, he appears like an Abel of purity offering innocent incense at the side of so many Cains making their carnal sacrifices. Tibullus alone anticipates his tenderness. At the same time, while Petrarch is purer than those classical lovers, he is never so natural as they sometimes are when their passages are least objectionable, and the sun-bursts of his real, manly, and natural human love seem to me often to come to us struggling through the clouds of Platonism.

I will not expatiate on the *concetti* that may be objected to in many of his sonnets, for they are so often in such close connection with exquisitely fine thoughts, that, in tearing away the weed, we might be in danger of snapping the flower.

I feel little inclined, besides, to dwell on Petrarch's faults with that feline dilation of vision which sees in the dark what would escape other eyes in daylight, for, if I could make out the strongest critical case against him, I should still have to answer this question, "How comes it that Petrarch's poetry, in spite of all these faults, has been the favourite of the world for nearly five hundred years?"

So strong a regard for Petrarch is rooted in the mind of Italy, that his renown has grown up like an oak which has reached maturity amidst the storms of ages, and fears not decay from revolving centuries. One of the high charms of his poetical language is its pure and melting melody, a charm untransferable to any more northern tongue.

No conformation of words will charm the ear unless they bring silent thoughts of corresponding sweetness to the mind; nor could the most sonorous, vapid verses be changed into poetry if

they were set to the music of the Spheres. It is scarcely necessary to say that Petrarch has intellectual graces of thought and spiritual felicities of diction, without which his tactics in the mere march of words would be a worthless skill.

The love of Petrarch was misplaced, but its utterance was at once so fervid and delicate, and its enthusiasm so enduring, that the purest minds feel justified in abstracting from their consideration the unhappiness of the attachment, and attending only to its devout fidelity. Among his deepest admirers we shall find women of virtue above suspicion, who are willing to forget his Laura being married, or to forgive the circumstance for the eloquence of his courtship and the unwavering faith of his affection. Nor is this predilection for Petrarch the result of female vanity and the mere love of homage. No; it is a wise instinctive consciousness in women that the offer of love to them, without enthusiasm, refinement, and *constancy*, is of no value at all. Without these qualities in their wooers, they are the slaves of the stronger sex. It is no wonder, therefore, that they are grateful to Petrarch for holding up the perfect image of a lover, and that they regard him as a friend to that passion, on the delicacy and constancy of which the happiness, the most hallowed ties, and the very continuance of the species depend.

In modern Italian criticism there are two schools of taste, whose respective partizans may be called the Petrarchists and the Danteists. The latter allege that Petrarch's amatory poetry, from its platonic and mystic character, was best suited to the age of cloisters, of dreaming voluptuaries, and of men living under tyrannical Governments, whose thoughts and feelings were oppressed and disguised. The genius of Dante, on the other hand, they say, appeals to all that is bold and natural in the human breast, and they trace the grand revival of his popularity in our own times to the re-awakened spirit of liberty. On this side of the question the most eminent Italian scholars and poets are certainly ranged. The most gifted man of that country with whom I was ever personally acquainted, Ugo Foscolo, was a vehement Danteist. Yet his copious memory was well stored with many a sonnet of Petrarch, which he could repeat by heart; and with all his Danteism, he infused the deepest tones of admiration into his recitation of the Petrarchan sonnets.

And altogether, Foscolo, though a cautious, is a candid admirer of our poet. He says, "The harmony, elegance, and perfection of his poetry are the result of long labour; but its original conceptions and pathos always sprang from the sudden inspiration of a deep and powerful passion. By an attentive perusal of all the writings of Petrarch, it may be reduced almost to a certainty that, by dwelling perpetually on the same ideas, and by allowing his mind to prey incessantly on itself, the whole train of his feelings and reflections acquired one strong character and tone, and, if

he was ever able to suppress them for a time, they returned to him with increased violence; that, to tranquillize this agitated state of his mind, he, in the first instance, communicated in a free and loose manner all that he thought and felt, in his correspondence with his intimate friends; that he afterwards reduced these narratives, with more order and description, into Latin verse; and that he, lastly, perfected them with a greater profusion of imagery and more art in his Italian poetry, the composition of which at first served only, as he frequently says, to divert and mitigate all his afflictions. We may thus understand the perfect concord which prevails in Petrarch's poetry between Nature and Art; between the accuracy of fact and the magic of invention; between depth and perspicuity; between devouring passion and calm meditation. It is precisely because the poetry of Petrarch originally sprang from the heart that his passion never seems fictitious or cold, notwithstanding the profuse ornament of his style, or the metaphysical elevation of his thoughts."

I quote Ugo Foscolo, because he is not only a writer of strong poetic feeling as well as philosophic judgment, but he is pre-eminent in that Italian critical school who see the merits of Petrarch in no exaggerated light, but, on the whole, prefer Dante to him as a poet. Petrarch's love-poetry, Foscolo remarks, may be considered as the intermediate link between that of the classics and the moderns. * * * * Petrarch both feels like the ancient and philosophizes like the modern poets. When he paints after the manner of the classics, he is equal to them.

I despair of ever seeing in English verse a translation of Petrarch's Italian poetry that shall be adequate and popular. The term adequate, of course, always applies to the translation of genuine poetry in a subdued sense. It means the best that can be expected, after making allowance for that escape of etherial spirit which is inevitable in the transfer of poetic thoughts from one language to another. The word popular is also to be taken in a limited meaning regarding all translations. Cowper's ballad of John Gilpin is twenty times more popular than his Homer; yet the latter work is deservedly popular in comparison with the bulk of translations from antiquity. The same thing may be said of Cary's Dante; it is, like Cowper's Homer, as adequate and popular as translated poetry can be expected to be. Yet I doubt if either of those poets could have succeeded so well with Petrarch. Lady Dacre has shown much grace and ingenuity in the passages of our poet which she has versified; but she could not transfer into English those graces of Petrarchan diction, which are mostly intransferable. She could not bring the Italian language along with her.

Is not this, it may be asked, a proof that Petrarch is not so genuine a poet as Homer and Dante, since his charm depends upon the delicacies of diction that evaporate in the transfer from

tongue to tongue, more than on hardy thoughts that will take root in any language to which they are transplanted? In a general view, I agree with this proposition; yet, what we call felicitous diction can never have a potent charm without refined thoughts, which, like essential odours, may be too impalpable to bear transfusion. Burns has the happiest imaginable Scottish diction; yet, what true Scotsman would bear to see him *done* into French? And, with the exception of German, what language has done justice to Shakespeare?

The reader must be a true Petrarchist who is unconscious of a general similarity in the character of his sonnets, which, in the long perusal of them, amounts to monotony. At the same time, it must be said that this monotonous similarity impresses the mind of Petrarch's reader exactly in proportion to the slenderness of his acquaintance with the poet. Does he approach Petrarch's sonnets for the first time, they will probably appear to him all as like to each other as the sheep of a flock; but, when he becomes more familiar with them, he will perceive an interesting individuality in every sonnet, and will discriminate their individual character as precisely as the shepherd can distinguish every single sheep of his flock by its voice and face. It would be rather tedious to pull out, one by one, all the sheep and lambs of our poet's flock of sonnets, and to enumerate the varieties of their bleat; and though, by studying the subject half his lifetime, a man might classify them by their main characteristics, he would find them defy a perfect classification, as they often blend different qualities. Some of them have a uniform expression of calm and beautiful feeling. Others breathe ardent and almost hopeful passion. Others again show him jealous, despondent, or despairing; sometimes gloomily, and sometimes with touching resignation. But a great many of them have a mixed character, where, in the space of a line, he passes from one mood of mind to another.

As an example of pleasing and calm reflection, I would cite the first of his sonnets, according to the order in which they are usually printed. It is singular to find it confessing the poet's shame at the retrospect of so many years spent.

Voi ch' ascoltate in rime sparse il suono.

Ye who shall hear amidst my scatter'd lays
The sighs with which I fann'd and fed my heart,
When, young and glowing, I was but in part
The man I am become in later days;
Ye who have mark'd the changes of my style
From vain despondency to hope as vain,
From him among you, who has felt love's pain,
I hope for pardon, ay, and pity's smile,
Though conscious, now, my passion was a theme,
Long, idly dwelt on by the public tongue,
I blush for all the vanities I've sung,
And find the world's applause a fleeting dream.

The following sonnet (cxxvi.) is such a gem of Petrarchan and Platonic homage to beauty that I subjoin my translation of it with the most sincere avowal of my conscious inability to do it justice.

In what ideal world or part of heaven
Did Nature find the model of that face
And form, so fraught with loveliness and grace,
In which, to our creation, she has given
Her prime proof of creative power above?
What fountain nymph or goddess ever let
Such lovely tresses float of gold refined
Upon the breeze, or in a single mind,
Where have so many virtues ever met,
E'en though those charms have slain my bosom's weal?
He knows not love who has not seen her eyes
Turn when she sweetly speaks, or smiles, or sighs,
Or how the power of love can hurt or heal.

Sonnet lxix. is remarkable for the fineness of its closing thought.

Time was her tresses by the breathing air
Were wreathed to many a ringlet golden bright,
Time was her eyes diffused unmeasured light,
Though now their lovely beams are waxing rare,
Her face methought that in its blushes show'd
Compassion, her angelic shape and walk,
Her voice that seem'd with Heaven's own speech to talk;
At these, what wonder that my bosom glow'd!
A living sun she seem'd—a spirit of heaven.
Those charms decline: but does my passion? No!
I love not less—the slackening of the bow
Assuages not the wound its shaft has given.

The following sonnet is remarkable for its last four lines having puzzled all the poet's commentators to explain what he meant by the words "Al man ond' io scrivo è fatta amica, a questo volta." I agree with De Sade in conjecturing that Laura in receiving some of his verses had touched the hand that presented them, in token of her gratitude.*

In solitudes I've ever loved to abide
By woods and streams, and shunn'd the evil-hearted,
Who from the path of heaven are foully parted;
Sweet Tuscany has been to me denied,
Whose sunny realms I would have gladly haunted,
Yet still the Sorgue his beauteous hills among
Has lent auxiliar murmurs to my song,
And echoed to the plaints my love has chanted.
Here triumph'd, too, the poet's hand that wrote
These lines—the power of love has witness'd this.
Delicious victory! I know my bliss,
She knows it too—the saint on whom I dote.

Of Petrarch's poetry that is not amatory, Ugo Foscolo says with justice, that his three political canzoni, exquisite as they are in versification and style, do not breathe that enthusiasm which opened to Pindar's grasp all the wealth of imagination, all the treasures of historic lore and moral truth, to illustrate and dignify his strain. Yet the vigour, the arrangement, and the perspicuity of the ideas in these canzoni of Petrarch, the tone of conviction and melancholy in which the patriot upbraids and mourns over

* Cercato ho sempre solitaria vita.—Sonnet 221, De Sade, vol. ii. p. 8.

his country, strike the heart with such force, as to atone for the absence of grand and exuberant imagery, and of the irresistible impetus which peculiarly belongs to the ode.

Petrarch's principal Italian poem that is not thrown into the shape of the sonnet is his Trionfi, or Triumphs, in five parts. Though not consisting of sonnets, however, it has the same amatory and constant allusions to Laura as the greater part of his poetry. Here, as elsewhere, he recurs from time to time to the history of his passion, its rise, its progress, and its end. For this purpose, he describes human life in its successive stages, omitting no opportunity of introducing his mistress and himself.

1. Man in his youthful state is the slave of love. 2. As he advances in age, he feels the inconveniences of his amatory propensities, and endeavours to conquer them by chastity. 3. Amidst the victory which he obtains over himself, Death steps in, and levels alike the victor and the vanquished. 4. But Fame arrives after death, and makes man as it were live again after death, and survive it for ages by his fame. 5. But man even by fame cannot live for ever, if God has not granted him a happy existence throughout eternity. Thus Love triumphs over Man; Chastity triumphs over Love; Death triumphs over both; Fame triumphs over Death; Time triumphs over Fame; and Eternity triumphs over Time.

The subordinate parts and imagery of the Trionfi have a beauty rather arabesque than classical, and resembling the florid tracery of the later oriental Gothic architecture. But the whole effect of the poem is pleasing, from the general grandeur of its design.

In summing up Petrarch's character, moral, political, and poetical, I should not stint myself to the equivocal phrase used by Tacitus respecting Agricola: *Bonum virum facile dixeris, magnum libenter*, but should at once claim for his memory the title both of great and good. A restorer of ancient learning, a rescuer of its treasures from oblivion, a despiser of many contemporary superstitions, a man, who, though no reformer himself, certainly contributed to the Reformation, an Italian patriot who was above provincial partialities, a poet who still lives in the hearts of his country, and who is shielded from oblivion by more generations than there were hides in the sevenfold shield of Ajax—if this was not a great man, many who are so called must bear the title unworthily. He was a faithful friend, and a devoted lover, and appears to have been one of the most fascinating beings that ever existed. Even when his failings were admitted, it must still be said that *even his failings leaned to virtue's side*, and, altogether we may pronounce that

> His life was gentle, and the elements
> So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up
> And say to all the world, "This was a man!"

LAVRA

PETRARCH'S SONNETS,

ETC.

TO LAURA IN LIFE.

SONNET I.

Voi, ch' ascoltate in rime sparse il suono.

HE CONFESSES THE VANITY OF HIS PASSION.

YE who in rhymes dispersed the echoes hear
Of those sad sighs with which my heart I fed
When early youth my mazy wanderings led,
Fondly diverse from what I now appear,
Fluttering 'twixt frantic hope and frantic fear,
From those by whom my various style is read,
I hope, if e'er their hearts for love have bled,
Not only pardon, but perhaps a tear.
But now I clearly see that of mankind
Long time I was the tale: whence bitter thought
And self-reproach with frequent blushes teem;
While of my frenzy, shame the fruit I find,
And sad repentance, and the proof, dear-bought,
That the world's joy is but a flitting dream.

CHARLEMONT.

O YE, who list in scatter'd verse the sound
Of all those sighs with which my heart I fed,
When I, by youthful error first misled,
Unlike my present self in heart was found;
Who list the plaints, the reasonings that abound
Throughout my song, by hopes, and vain griefs bred;
If e'er true love its influence o'er ye shed,
Oh! let your pity be with pardon crown'd.

But now full well I see how to the crowd
For length of time I proved a public jest:
E'en by myself my folly is allow'd:
And of my vanity the fruit is shame,
Repentance, and a knowledge strong imprest,
That worldly pleasure is a passing dream. NOTT.

YE, who may listen to each idle strain
Bearing those sighs, on which my heart was fed
In life's first morn, by youthful error led,
(Far other then from what I now remain!)
That thus in varying numbers I complain,
Numbers of sorrow vain and vain hope bred,
If any in love's lore be practisèd,
His pardon,—e'en his pity I may obtain:
But now aware that to mankind my name
Too long has been a bye-word and a scorn,
I blush before my own severer thought;
Of my past wanderings the sole fruit is shame,
And deep repentance, of the knowledge born
That all we value in this world is naught. DACRE.

SONNET II.

Per far una leggiadra sua vendetta.

HOW HE BECAME THE VICTIM OF LOVE.

FOR many a crime at once to make me smart,
And a delicious vengeance to obtain,
Love secretly took up his bow again,
As one who acts the cunning coward's part;
My courage had retired within my heart,
There to defend the pass bright eyes might gain;
When his dread archery was pour'd amain
Where blunted erst had fallen every dart.
Scared at the sudden brisk attack, I found
Nor time, nor vigour to repel the foe
With weapons suited to the direful need;
No kind protection of rough rising ground,
Where from defeat I might securely speed,
Which fain I would e'en now, but ah, no method know!
NOTT.

ONE sweet and signal vengeance to obtain,
To punish in a day my life's long crime,
As one who, bent on harm, waits place and time,
Love craftily took up his bow again.
My virtue had retired to watch my heart,
Thence of weak eyes the danger to repell,
When momently a mortal blow there fell
Where blunted hitherto dropt every dart.
And thus, o'erpower'd in that first attack,
She had nor vigour left enough, nor room
Even to arm her for my pressing need,
Nor to the steep and painful mountain back
To draw me, safe and scathless from that doom,
Whence, though alas! too weak, she fain had freed

MACGREGOR.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIAT

SONNET III.

Era 'l giorno ch' al sol si scoloraro.

HE BLAMES LOVE FOR WOUNDING HIM ON A HOLY DAY (GOOD FRIDAY).

'TWAS on the morn, when heaven its blessed ray
In pity to its suffering master veil'd,
First did I, Lady, to your beauty yield,
Of your victorious eyes th' unguarded prey.
Ah! little reck'd I that, on such a day,
Needed against Love's arrows any shield;
And trod, securely trod, the fatal field:
Whence, with the world's, began my heart's dismay.
On every side Love found his victim bare,
And through mine eyes transfix'd my throbbing heart;
Those eyes, which now with constant sorrows flow:
But poor the triumph of his boasted art,
Who thus could pierce a naked youth, nor dare
To you in armour mail'd even to display his bow!

WRANGHAM.

'TWAS on the blessed morning when the sun
In pity to our Maker hid his light,
That, unawares, the captive I was won,
Lady, of your bright eyes which chain'd me quite;
That seem'd to me no time against the blows
Of love to make defence, no frame relief:
Secure and unsuspecting, thus my woes

Date their commencement from the common grief.
Love found me feeble then and fenceless all,
Open the way and easy to my heart
Through eyes, where since my sorrows ebb and flow:
But therein was, methinks, his triumph small,
On me, in that weak state, to strike his dart,
Yet hide from you so strong his very bow. MACGREGOR.

SONNET IV.

Quel ch' infinita providenza ed arte.

HE CELEBRATES THE BIRTHPLACE OF LAURA.

HE that with wisdom, goodness, power divine,
Did ample Nature's perfect book design,
Adorn'd this beauteous world, and those above,
Kindled fierce Mars, and soften'd milder Jove:
When seen on earth the shadows to fulfill
Of the less volume which conceal'd his will,
Took John and Peter from their homely care,
And made them pillars of his temple fair.
Nor in imperial Rome would He be born,
Whom servile Judah yet received with scorn:
E'en Bethlehem could her infant King disown,
And the rude manger was his early throne.
Victorious sufferings did his pomp display,
Nor other chariot or triumphal way.
At once by Heaven's example and decree,
Such honour waits on such humility. BASIL KENNET.

THE High Eternal, in whose works supreme
The Master's vast creative power hath spoke:
At whose command each circling sphere awoke,
Jove mildly rose, and Mars with fiercer beam:
To earth He came, to ratify the scheme
Reveal'd to us through prophecy's dark cloak,
To sound redemption, speak man's fallen yoke;
He chose the humblest for that heavenly theme.
But He conferr'd not on imperial Rome
His birth's renown; He chose a lowlier sky,—
To stand, through Him, the proudest spot on earth!
And now doth shine within its humble home
A star, that doth each other so outvie,
That grateful nature hails its lovely birth. WOLLASTON.

WHO show'd such infinite providence and skill
In his eternal government divine,
Who launch'd the spheres, gave sun and moon to shine,
And brightest wonders the dark void to fill;
On earth who came the Scriptures to maintain,
Which for long years the truth had buried yet,
Took John and Peter from the fisher's net
And gave to each his part in the heavenly reign.
He for his birth fair Rome preferr'd not then,
But lowly Bethlehem; thus o'er proudest state
He ever loves humility to raise.
Now rises from small spot like sun again,
Whom Nature hails, the place grows bright and great
Which birth so heavenly to our earth displays. MACGREGOR.

SONNET V.

Quand' io movo i sospiri a chiamar voi.

HE PLAYS UPON THE NAME LAURETA OR LAURA.

IN sighs when I outbreathe your cherish'd name,
That name which love has writ upon my heart,
LAUd instantly upon my doting tongue,
At the first thought of its sweet sound, is heard;
Your REgal state, which I encounter next,
Doubles my valour in that high emprize:
But TAcit ends the word; your praise to tell
Is fitting load for better backs than mine.
Thus all who call you, by the name itself,
Are taught at once to LAUd and to REvere,
O worthy of all reverence and esteem!
Save that perchance Apollo may disdain
That mortal tongue of his immortal boughs
Should ever so presume as e'en to speak. ANON.

SONNET VI.

Sì traviato è 'l folle mio desio.

OF HIS FOOLISH PASSION FOR LAURA.

So wayward now my will, and so unwise,
To follow her who turns from me in flight,
And, from love's fetters free herself and light,
Before my slow and shackled motion flies,

That less it lists, the more my sighs and cries
Would point where passes the safe path and right,
Nor aught avails to check or to excite,
For Love's own nature curb and spur defies.
Thus, when perforce the bridle he has won,
And helpless at his mercy I remain,
Against my will he speeds me to mine end
'Neath yon cold laurel, whose false boughs upon
Hangs the harsh fruit, which, tasted, spreads the pain
I sought to stay, and mars where it should mend.

MACGREGOR.

My tameless will doth recklessly pursue
Her, who, unshackled by love's heavy chain,
Flies swiftly from its chase, whilst I in vain
My fetter'd journey pantingly renew;
The safer track I offer to its view,
But hopeless is my power to restrain,
It rides regardless of the spur or rein;
Love makes it scorn the hand that would subdue.
The triumph won, the bridle all its own,
Without one curb I stand within its power,
And my destruction helplessly presage:
It guides me to that laurel, ever known,
To all who seek the healing of its flower,
To aggravate the wound it should assuage. WOLLASTON.

SONNET VII.

La gola e 'l sonno e l' oziose piume.

TO A FRIEND, ENCOURAGING HIM TO PURSUE POETRY.

Torn is each virtue from its earthly throne
By sloth, intemperance, and voluptuous ease;
E'en nature deviates from her wonted ways,
Too much the slave of vicious custom grown.
Far hence is every light celestial gone,
That guides mankind through life's perplexing maze;
And those, whom Helicon's sweet waters please,
From mocking crowds receive contempt alone.
Who now would laurel, myrtle-wreaths obtain?
Let want, let shame, Philosophy attend!
Cries the base world, intent on sordid gain.

What though thy favourite path be trod by few;
Let it but urge thee more, dear gentle friend!
Thy great design of glory to pursue. ANON. 1777.

INTEMPERANCE, slumber, and the slothful down
Have chased each virtue from this world away;
Hence is our nature nearly led astray
From its due course, by habitude o'erthrown;
Those kindly lights of heaven so dim are grown,
Which shed o'er human life instruction's ray;
That him with scornful wonder they survey,
Who would draw forth the stream of Helicon.
"Whom doth the laurel please, or myrtle now?
Naked and poor, Philosophy, art thou!"
The worthless crowd, intent on lucre, cries.
Few on thy chosen road will thee attend;
Yet let it more incite thee, gentle friend,
To prosecute thy high-conceived emprize. NOTT.

SONNET VIII.

A piè de' colli ove la bella vesta.

HE FEIGNS AN ADDRESS FROM SOME BIRDS WHICH HE HAD PRESENTED.

BENEATH the verdant hills—where the fair vest
Of earthly mould first took the Lady dear,
Who him that sends us, feather'd captives, here
Awakens often from his tearful rest—
Lived we in freedom and in quiet, blest
With everything which life below might cheer,
No foe suspecting, harass'd by no fear
That aught our wanderings ever could molest;
But snatch'd from that serener life, and thrown
To the low wretched state we here endure,
One comfort, short of death, survives alone:
Vengeance upon our captor full and sure!
Who, slave himself at others' power, remains
Pent in worse prison, bound by sterner chains.
MACGREGOR.

BENEATH those very hills, where beauty threw
Her mantle first o'er that earth-moulded fair,
Who oft from sleep, while shedding many a tear,
Awakens him that sends us unto you,
Our lives in peacefulness and freedom flew,
E'en as all creatures wish who hold life dear;

Nor deem'd we aught could in its course come near,
Whence to our wanderings danger might accrue.
But from the wretched state to which we 're brought,
Leaving another with sereneness fraught,
Nay, e'en from death, one comfort we obtain;
That vengeance follows him who sent us here;
Another's utmost thraldom doomed to bear,
Bound he now lies with a still stronger chain. NOTT.

SONNET IX.

Quando 'l pianeta che distingue l' ore.

WITH A PRESENT OF FRUIT IN SPRING.

WHEN the great planet which directs the hours
To dwell with Taurus from the North is borne,
Such virtue rays from each enkindled horn,
Rare beauty instantly all nature dowers;
Nor this alone, which meets our sight, that flowers
Richly the upland and the vale adorn,
But Earth's cold womb, else lustreless and lorn,
Is quick and warm with vivifying powers,
Till herbs and fruits, like these I send, are rife.
—So she, a sun amid her fellow fair,
Shedding the rays of her bright eyes on me,
Thoughts, acts, and words of love wakes into life—
But, ah! for me is no new Spring, nor e'er,
Smile they on whom she will, again can be. MACGREGOR.

WHEN Taurus in his house doth Phœbus keep,
There pours so bright a virtue from his crest
That Nature wakes, and stands in beauty drest,
The flow'ring meadows start with joy from sleep:
Nor they alone rejoice—earth's bosom deep
(Though not one beam illumes her night of rest)
Responsive smiles, and from her fruitful breast
Gives forth her treasures for her sons to reap.
Thus she, who dwells amid her sex a sun,
Shedding upon my soul her eyes' full light,
Each thought creates, each deed, each word of love:
But though my heart's proud mastery she hath won,
Alas! within me dwells eternal night:
My spirit ne'er Spring's genial breath doth prove.
WOLLASTON.

SONNET X.

Gloriosa Colonna, in cui s' appoggia.

TO STEFANO COLONNA THE ELDER, INVITING HIM TO THE COUNTRY.

GLORIOUS Colonna! still the strength and stay
Of our best hopes, and the great Latin name,
Whom power could never from the true right way
Seduce by flattery or by terror tame:
No palace, theatres, nor arches here,
But, in their stead, the fir, the beech, and pine
On the green sward, with the fair mountain near
Paced to and fro by poet friend of thine;
Thus unto heaven the soul from earth is caught;
While Philomel, who sweetly to the shade
The livelong night her desolate lot complains,
Fills the soft heart with many an amorous thought:
—Ah! why is so rare good imperfect made
While severed from us still my lord remains. MACGREGOR.

GLORIOUS Colonna! thou, the Latins' hope,
The proud supporter of our lofty name,
Thou hold'st thy path of virtue still the same,
Amid the thunderings of Rome's Jove—the Pope.
Not here do human structures interlope
The fir to rival, or the pine-tree's claim,
The soul may revel in poetic flame
Upon yon mountain's green and gentle slope.
And thus from earth to heaven the spirit soars,
Whilst Philomel her tale of woe repeats
Amid the sympathising shades of night,
Thus through man's breast love's current sweetly pours:
Yet still thine absence half the joy defeats,—
Alas! my friend, why dim such radiant light?

WOLLASTON.

BALLATA I.

Lassare il velo o per sole o per ombra.

PERCEIVING HIS PASSION, LAURA'S SEVERITY INCREASES.

NEVER thy veil, in sun or in the shade,
Lady, a moment I have seen
Quitted, since of my heart the queen
Mine eyes confessing thee my heart betray'd.

While my enamour'd thoughts I kept conceal'd,
Those fond vain hopes by which I die,
In thy sweet features kindness beam'd:
Changed was the gentle language of thine eye
Soon as my foolish heart itself reveal'd;
And all that mildness which I changeless deem'd—
All, all withdrawn which most my soul esteem'd.
Yet still the veil I must obey,
Which, whatsoe'er the aspect of the day,
Thine eyes' fair radiance hides, my life to overshade.

CAPEL LOFFT.

WHEREFORE, my unkind fair one, say,
Whether the sun fierce darts his ray,
Or whether gloom o'erspreads the sky,
That envious veil is ne'er thrown by;
Though well you read my heart, and knew
How much I long'd your charms to view?
While I conceal'd each tender thought,
That my fond mind's destruction wrought,
Your face with pity sweetly shone;
But, when love made my passion known,
Your sunny locks were seen no more,
Nor smiled your eyes as heretofore;
Behind a jealous cloud retired
Those beauties which I most admired.
And shall a veil thus rule my fate?
O cruel veil, that whether heat
Or cold be felt, art doom'd to prove
Fatal to me, shadowing the lights I love!

NOTT.

SONNET XI.

Se la mia vita dall' aspro tormento.

HE HOPES THAT TIME WILL RENDER HER MORE MERCIFUL.

IF o'er each bitter pang, each hidden throe
Sadly triumphant I my years drag on,
Till even the radiance of those eyes is gone,
Lady, which star-like now illume thy brow;
And silver'd are those locks of golden glow,
And wreaths and robes of green aside are thrown,
And from thy cheek those hues of beauty flown,
Which check'd so long the utterance of my woe;

Haply my bolder tongue may then reveal
The bosom'd annals of my heart's fierce fire,
The martyr-throbs that now in night I veil:
And should the chill Time frown on young Desire,
Still, still some late remorse that breast may feel,
And heave a tardy sigh—ere love with life expire

WRANGHAM.

LADY, if grace to me so long be lent
From love's sharp tyranny and trials keen,
Ere my last days, in life's far vale, are seen,
To know of thy bright eyes the lustre spent,
The fine gold of thy hair with silver sprent,
Neglected the gay wreaths and robes of green,
Pale, too, and thin the face which made me, e'en
'Gainst injury, slow and timid to lament:
Then will I, for such boldness love would give,
Lay bare my secret heart, in martyr's fire
Years, days, and hours that yet has known to live;
And, though the time then suit not fair desire,
At least there may arrive to my long grief,
Too late of tender sighs the poor relief. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XII.

Quando fra l' altre donne ad ora ad ora.

THE BEAUTY OF LAURA LEADS HIM TO THE CONTEMPLATION OF THE SUPREME GOOD.

THRONED on her angel brow, when Love displays
His radiant form among all other fair,
Far as eclipsed their choicest charms appear,
I feel beyond its wont my passion blaze.
And still I bless the day, the hour, the place,
When first so high mine eyes I dared to rear;
And say, "Fond heart, thy gratitude declare,
That then thou had'st the privilege to gaze.
'T was she inspired the tender thought of love,
Which points to heaven, and teaches to despise
The earthly vanities that others prize:
She gave the soul's light grace, which to the skies
Bids thee straight onward in the right path move;
Whence buoy'd by hope e'en now I soar to worlds above."

WRANGHAM.

When Love, whose proper throne is that sweet face,
At times escorts her 'mid the sisters fair,
As their each beauty is than hers less rare,
So swells in me the fond desire apace.
I bless the hour, the season and the place,
So high and heavenward when my eyes could dare;
And say: "My heart! in grateful memory bear
This lofty honour and surpassing grace:
From her descends the tender truthful thought,
Which follow'd, bliss supreme shall thee repay,
Who spurn'st the vanities that win the crowd:
From her that gentle graceful love is caught,
To heaven which leads thee by the right-hand way,
And crowns e'en here with hopes both pure and proud."

MACGREGOR.

BALLATA II.

Occhi miei lassi, mentre ch' io vi giro.

HE INVITES HIS EYES TO FEAST THEMSELVES ON LAURA.

My wearied eyes! while looking thus
On that fair fatal face to us,
Be wise, be brief, for—hence my sighs—
Already Love our bliss denies.
Death only can the amorous track
Shut from my thoughts which leads them back
To the sweet port of all their weal;
But lesser objects may conceal
Our light from you, that meaner far
In virtue and perfection are.
Wherefore, poor eyes! ere yet appears,
Already nigh, the time of tears,
Now, after long privation past,
Look, and some comfort take at last.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XIII.

Io mi rivolgo indietro a ciascun passo.

ON QUITTING LAURA.

With weary frame which painfully I bear,
I look behind me at each onward pace,
And then take comfort from your native air,
Which following fans my melancholy face;

The far way, my frail life, the cherish'd fair
Whom thus I leave, as then my thoughts retrace,
I fix my feet in silent pale despair,
And on the earth my tearful eyes abase.
At times a doubt, too, rises on my woes,
"How ever can this weak and wasted frame
Live from life's spirit and one source afar?"
Love's answer soon the truth forgotten shows—
"This high pure privilege true lovers claim,
Who from mere human feelings franchised are!"

MACGREGOR.

I LOOK behind each step I onward trace,
Scarce able to support my wearied frame,
Ah, wretched me! I pantingly exclaim,
And from her atmosphere new strength embrace;
I think on her I leave—my heart's best grace—
My lengthen'd journey—life's capricious flame—
I pause in withering fear, with purpose tame,
Whilst down my cheek tears quick each other chase.
My doubting heart thus questions in my grief:
"Whence comes it that existence thou canst know
When from thy spirit thou dost dwell entire?"
Love, holy Love, my heart then answers brief:
"Such privilege I do on all bestow
Who feed my flame with nought of earthly fire!"

WOLLASTON.

SONNET XIV.

Movesi 'l vecchierel canuto e bianco.

HE COMPARES HIMSELF TO A PILGRIM.

THE palmer bent, with locks of silver gray,
Quits the sweet spot where he has pass'd his years,
Quits his poor family, whose anxious fears
Paint the loved father fainting on his way;
And trembling, on his aged limbs slow borne,
In these last days that close his earthly course,
He, in his soul's strong purpose, finds new force,
Though weak with age, though by long travel worn:
Thus reaching Rome, led on by pious love,
He seeks the image of that Saviour Lord
Whom soon he hopes to meet in bliss above:

So, oft in other forms I seek to trace
Some charm, that to my heart may yet afford
A faint resemblance of thy matchless grace. DACRE.

As parts the aged pilgrim, worn and gray,
From the dear spot his life where he had spent,
From his poor family by sorrow rent,
Whose love still fears him fainting in decay:
Thence dragging heavily, in life's last day,
His suffering frame, on pious journey bent,
Pricking with earnest prayers his good intent,
Though bow'd with years, and weary with the way,
He reaches Rome, still following his desire
The likeness of his Lord on earth to see,
Whom yet he hopes in heaven above to meet;
So I, too, seek, nor in the fond quest tire,
Lady, in other fair if aught there be
That faintly may recall thy beauties sweet. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XV.

Piovonmi amare lagrime dal viso.

HIS STATE WHEN LAURA IS PRESENT, AND WHEN SHE DEPARTS.

DOWN my cheeks bitter tears incessant rain,
And my heart struggles with convulsive sighs,
When, Laura, upon you I turn my eyes,
For whom the world's allurements I disdain.
But when I see that gentle smile again,
That modest, sweet, and tender smile, arise,
It pours on every sense a blest surprise;
Lost in delight is all my torturing pain.
Too soon this heavenly transport sinks and dies:
When all thy soothing charms my fate removes
At thy departure from my ravish'd view.
To that sole refuge its firm faith approves
My spirit from my ravish'd bosom flies,
And wing'd with fond remembrance follows you.
CAPEL LOFFT.

TEARS, bitter tears adown my pale cheek rain,
Bursts from mine anguish'd breast a storm of sighs,
Whene'er on you I turn my passionate eyes,
For whom alone this bright world I disdain.

True! to my ardent wishes and old pain
That mild sweet smile a peaceful balm supplies,
Rescues me from the martyr fire that tries,
Rapt and intent on you whilst I remain;
Thus in your presence—but my spirits freeze
When, ushering with fond acts a warm adieu,
My fatal stars from life's quench'd heaven decay.
My soul released at last with Love's apt keys
But issues from my heart to follow you,
Nor tears itself without much thought away. MACGREGOR

SONNET XVI.

Quand' io son tutto volto in quella parte.

HE FLIES, BUT PASSION PURSUES HIM.

WHEN I reflect and turn me to that part
Whence my sweet lady beam'd in purest light,
And in my inmost thought remains that light
Which burns me and consumes in every part,
I, who yet dread lest from my heart it part
And see at hand the end of this my light,
Go lonely, like a man deprived of light,
Ignorant where to go; whence to depart.
Thus flee I from the stroke which lays me dead,
Yet flee not with such speed but that desire
Follows, companion of my flight alone.
Silent I go:—but these my words, though dead,
Others would cause to weep—this I desire,
That I may weep and waste myself alone. CAPEL LOFFT

WHEN all my mind I turn to the one part
Where sheds my lady's face its beauteous light,
And lingers in my loving thought the light
That burns and racks within me ev'ry part,
I from my heart who fear that it may part,
And see the near end of my single light,
Go, as a blind man, groping without light,
Who knows not where yet presses to depart.
Thus from the blows which ever wish me dead
I flee, but not so swiftly that desire
Ceases to come, as is its wont, with me.

Silent I move: for accents of the dead
Would melt the general age: and I desire
That sighs and tears should only fall from me. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XVII.

Son animali al mondo di sì altera.

HE COMPARES HIMSELF TO A MOTH.

CREATURES there are in life of such keen sight
That no defence they need from noonday sun,
And others dazzled by excess of light
Who issue not abroad till day is done,
And, with weak fondness, some because 'tis bright,
Who in the death-flame for enjoyment run,
Thus proving theirs a different virtue quite—
Alas! of this last kind myself am one;
For, of this fair the splendour to regard,
I am but weak and ill—against late hours
And darkness gath'ring round—myself to ward.
Wherefore, with tearful eyes of failing powers,
My destiny condemns me still to turn
Where following faster I but fiercer burn. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XVIII.

Vergognando talor ch' ancor si taccia.

THE PRAISES OF LAURA TRANSCEND HIS POETIC POWERS.

ASHAMED sometimes thy beauties should remain
As yet unsung, sweet lady, in my rhyme;
When first I saw thee I recall the time,
Pleasing as none shall ever please again.
But no fit polish can my verse attain,
Not mine is strength to try the task sublime:
My genius, measuring its power to climb,
From such attempt doth prudently refrain.
Full oft I oped my lips to chant thy name;
Then in mid utterance the lay was lost:
But say what muse can dare so bold a flight?
Full oft I strove in measure to indite;
But ah, the pen, the hand, the vein I boast,
At once were vanquish'd by the mighty theme! NOTT.

ASHAMED at times that I am silent, yet,
Lady, though your rare beauties prompt my rhyme,
When first I saw thee I recall the time
Such as again no other can be met.
But, with such burthen on my shoulders set,
My mind, its frailty feeling, cannot climb,
And shrinks alike from polish'd and sublime,
While my vain utterance frozen terrors let.
Often already have I sought to sing,
But midway in my breast the voice was stay'd,
For ah! so high what praise may ever spring?
And oft have I the tender verse essay'd,
But still in vain; pen, hand, and intellect
In the first effort conquer'd are and check'd. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XIX.

Mille fiate, o dolce mia guerrera.

HIS HEART, REJECTED BY LAURA, WILL PERISH, UNLESS SHE RELENT.

A THOUSAND times, sweet warrior, have I tried,
Proffering my heart to thee, some peace to gain
From those bright eyes, but still, alas! in vain,
To such low level stoops not thy chaste pride.
If others seek the love thus thrown aside,
Vain were their hopes and labours to obtain;
The heart thou spurnest I alike disdain,
To thee displeasing, 'tis by me denied.
But if, discarded thus, it find not thee
Its joyless exile willing to befriend,
Alone, untaught at others' will to wend,
Soon from life's weary burden will it flee.
How heavy then the guilt to both, but more
To thee, for thee it did the most adore. MACGREGOR.

A THOUSAND times, sweet warrior, to obtain
Peace with those beauteous eyes I've vainly tried,
Proffering my heart; but with that lofty pride
To bend your looks so lowly you refrain:
Expects a stranger fair that heart to gain,
In frail, fallacious hopes will she confide:
It never more to me can be allied;
Since what you scorn, dear lady, I disdain.

In its sad exile if no aid you lend,
Banish'd by me; and it can neither stay
Alone, nor yet another's call obey;
Its vital course must hasten to its end:
Ah me, how guilty then we both should prove,
But guilty you the most, for you it most doth love! NOTT

SESTINA I.

A qualunque animale alberga in terra.

NIGHT BRINGS HIM NO REST. HE IS THE PREY OF DESPAIR.

To every animal that dwells on earth,
Except to those which have in hate the sun,
Their time of labour is while lasts the day;
But when high heaven relumes its thousand stars,
This seeks his hut, and that its native wood,
Each finds repose, at least until the dawn.

But I, when fresh and fair begins the dawn
To chase the lingering shades that cloak'd the earth,
Wakening the animals in every wood,
No truce to sorrow find while rolls the sun;
And, when again I see the glistening stars,
Still wander, weeping, wishing for the day.

When sober evening chases the bright day,
And this our darkness makes for others dawn,
Pensive I look upon the cruel stars
Which framed me of such pliant passionate earth,
And curse the day that e'er I saw the sun,
Which makes me native seem of wildest wood.

And yet methinks was ne'er in any wood,
So wild a denizen, by night or day,
As she whom thus I blame in shade and sun:
Me night's first sleep o'ercomes not, nor the dawn,
For though in mortal coil I tread the earth,
My firm and fond desire is from the stars.

Ere up to you I turn, O lustrous stars,
Or downwards in love's labyrinthine wood,
Leaving my fleshly frame in mouldering earth,
Could I but pity find in her, one day

Would many years redeem, and to the dawn
With bliss enrich me from the setting sun!

Oh! might I be with her where sinks the sun,
No other eyes upon us but the stars,
Alone, one sweet night, ended by no dawn,
Nor she again transfigured in green wood,
To cheat my clasping arms, as on the day,
When Phœbus vainly follow'd her on earth.

I shall lie low in earth, in crumbling wood,
And clustering stars shall gem the noon of day,
Ere on so sweet a dawn shall rise that sun. MACGREGOR.

EACH creature on whose wakeful eyes
The bright sun pours his golden fire,
By day a destined toil pursues;
And, when heaven's lamps illume the skies,
All to some haunt for rest retire,
Till a fresh dawn that toil renews.
But I, when a new morn doth rise,
Chasing from earth its murky shades,
While ring the forests with delight,
Find no remission of my sighs;
And, soon as night her mantle spreads,
I weep, and wish returning light
Again when eve bids day retreat,
O'er other climes to dart its rays;
Pensive those cruel stars I view,
Which influence thus my amorous fate;
And imprecate that beauty's blaze,
Which o'er my form such wildness threw.
No forest surely in its glooms
Nurtures a savage so unkind
As she who bids these sorrows flow:
Me, nor the dawn nor sleep o'ercomes;
For, though of mortal mould, my mind
Feels more than passion's mortal glow.
Ere up to you, bright orbs, I fly,
Or to Love's bower speed down my way,
While here my mouldering limbs remain;
Let me her pity once espy:
Thus, rich in bliss, one little day
Shall recompense whole years of pain.

Be Laura mine at set of sun;
Let heaven's fires only mark our loves,
And the day ne'er its light renew;
My fond embrace may she not shun;
Nor Phœbus-like, through laurel groves,
May I a nymph transform'd pursue!
But I shall cast this mortal veil on earth,
And stars shall gild the noon, ere such bright scenes have birth. NOTT.

CANZONE I.

Nel dolce tempo della prima etade.

HIS SUFFERINGS SINCE HE BECAME THE SLAVE OF LOVE.

IN the sweet season when my life was new,
Which saw the birth, and still the being sees
Of the fierce passion for my ill that grew,
Fain would I sing—my sorrow to appease—
How then I lived, in liberty, at ease,
While o'er my heart held slighted Love no sway;
And how, at length, by too high scorn, for aye,
I sank his slave, and what befell me then,
Whereby to all a warning I remain;
Although my sharpest pain
Be elsewhere written, so that many a pen
Is tired already, and, in every vale,
The echo of my heavy sighs is rife,
Some credence forcing of my anguish'd life;
And, as her wont, if here my memory fail,
Be my long martyrdom its saving plea,
And the one thought which so its torment made,
As every feeling else to throw in shade,
And make me of myself forgetful be—
Ruling life's inmost core, its bare rind left for me.

Long years and many had pass'd o'er my head,
Since, in Love's first assault, was dealt my wound,
And from my brow its youthful air had fled,
While cold and cautious thoughts my heart around
Had made it almost adamantine ground,
To loosen which hard passion gave no rest:
No sorrow yet with tears had bathed my breast,

Nor broke my sleep: and what was not in mine
A miracle to me in others seem'd.
Life's sure test death is deem'd,
As cloudless eve best proves the past day fine;
Ah me! the tyrant whom I sing, descried
Ere long his error, that, till then, his dart
Not yet beneath the gown had pierced my heart,
And brought a puissant lady as his guide,
'Gainst whom of small or no avail has been
Genius, or force, to strive or supplicate.
These two transform'd me to my present state,
Making of breathing man a laurel green,
Which loses not its leaves though wintry blasts be keen.

What my amaze, when first I fully learn'd
The wondrous change upon my person done,
And saw my thin hairs to those green leaves turn'd
(Whence yet for them a crown I might have won);
My feet wherewith I stood, and moved, and run—
Thus to the soul the subject members bow—
Become two roots upon the shore, not now
Of fabled Peneus, but a stream as proud,
And stiffen'd to a branch my either arm!
Nor less was my alarm,
When next my frame white down was seen to shroud,
While, 'neath the deadly leven, shatter'd lay
My first green hope that soar'd, too proud, in air,
Because, in sooth, I knew not when nor where
I left my latter state; but, night and day,
Where it was struck, alone, in tears, I went,
Still seeking it alwhere, and in the wave;
And, for its fatal fall, while able, gave
My tongue no respite from its one lament,
For the sad snowy swan both form and language lent.

Thus that loved wave—my mortal speech put by
For birdlike song—I track'd with constant feet,
Still asking mercy with a stranger cry;
But ne'er in tones so tender, nor so sweet,
Knew I my amorous sorrow to repeat,
As might her hard and cruel bosom melt:
Judge, still if memory sting, what then I felt!

But ah! not now the past, it rather needs
Of her my lovely and inveterate foe
The present power to show,
Though such she be all language as exceeds.
She with a glance who rules us as her own,
Opening my breast my heart in hand to take,
Thus said to me: "Of this no mention make."
I saw her then, in alter'd air, alone,
So that I recognised her not—O shame
Be on my truant mind and faithless sight!
And when the truth I told her in sore fright,
She soon resumed her old accustom'd frame,
While, desperate and half dead, a hard rock mine became.

As spoke she, o'er her mien such feeling stirr'd,
That from the solid rock, with lively fear,
"Haply I am not what you deem," I heard;
And then methought, "If she but help me here,
No life can ever weary be, or drear;
To make me weep, return, my banish'd Lord!"
I know not how, but thence, the power restored,
Blaming no other than myself, I went,
And, nor alive, nor dead, the long day past.
But, because time flies fast,
And the pen answers ill my good intent,
Full many a thing long written in my mind
I here omit; and only mention such
Whereat who hears them now will marvel much.
Death so his hand around my vitals twined,
Not silence from its grasp my heart could save,
Or succour to its outraged virtue bring:
As speech to me was a forbidden thing,
To paper and to ink my griefs I gave—
Life, not my own, is lost through you who dig my grave.

I fondly thought before her eyes, at length,
Though low and lost, some mercy to obtain;
And this the hope which lent my spirit strength.
Sometimes humility o'ercomes disdain,
Sometimes inflames it to worse spite again;
This knew I, who so long was left in night,
That from such prayers had disappear'd my light;

Till I, who sought her still, nor found, alas!
Even her shade, nor of her feet a sign,
Outwearied and supine,
As one who midway sleeps, upon the grass
Threw me, and there, accusing the brief ray,
Of bitter tears I loosed the prison'd flood,
To flow and fall, to them as seem'd it good.
Ne'er vanish'd snow before the sun away,
As then to melt apace it me befell,
Till, 'neath a spreading beech a fountain swell'd;
Long in that change my humid course I held,—
Who ever saw from Man a true fount well? [tell.
And yet, though strange it sound, things known and sure I

The soul from God its nobler nature gains
(For none save He such favour could bestow)
And like our Maker its high state retains,
To pardon who is never tired, nor slow,
If but with humble heart and suppliant show,
For mercy for past sins to Him we bend;
And if, against his wont, He seem to lend,
Awhile, a cold ear to our earnest prayers,
'Tis that right fear the sinner more may fill;
For he repents but ill
His old crime for another who prepares.
Thus, when my lady, while her bosom yearn'd
With pity, deign'd to look on me, and knew
That equal with my fault its penance grew,
To my old state and shape I soon return'd,
But nought there is on earth in which the wise
May trust, for, wearying braving her afresh,
To rugged stone she changed my quivering flesh,
So that, in their old strain, my broken cries
In vain ask'd death, or told her one name to deaf skies.

A sad and wandering shade, I next recall,
Through many a distant and deserted glen,
That long I mourn'd my indissoluble thrall.
At length my malady seem'd ended, when
I to my earthly frame return'd again,
Haply but greater grief therein to feel;
Still following my desire with such fond zeal

That once (beneath the proud sun's fiercest blaze,
Returning from the chase, as was my wont)
Naked, where gush'd a font,
My fair and fatal tyrant met my gaze;
I whom nought else could pleasure, paused to look,
While, touch'd with shame as natural as intense,
Herself to hide or punish my offence,
She o'er my face the crystal waters shook
—I still speak true, though truth may seem a lie—
Instantly from my proper person torn,
A solitary stag, I felt me borne
In wingèd terrors the dark forest through,
As still of my own dogs the rushing storm I flew.
My song! I never was that cloud of gold
Which once descended in such precious rain,
Easing awhile with bliss Jove's amorous pain;
I was a flame, kindled by one bright eye,
I was the bird which gladly soar'd on high,
Exalting her whose praise in song I wake;
Nor, for new fancies, knew I to forsake
My first fond laurel, 'neath whose welcome shade
Ever from my firm heart all meaner pleasures fade.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XX.

Se l' onorata fronde, che prescrive.

TO STRAMAZZO OF PERUGIA, WHO INVITED HIM TO WRITE POETRY.

IF the world-honour'd leaf, whose green defies
The wrath of Heaven when thunders mighty Jove,
Had not to me prohibited the crown
Which wreathes of wont the gifted poet's brow,
I were a friend of these your idols too,
Whom our vile age so shamelessly ignores:
But that sore insult keeps me now aloof
From the first patron of the olive bough:
For Ethiop earth beneath its tropic sun
Ne'er burn'd with such fierce heat, as I with rage
At losing thing so comely and beloved.
Resort then to some calmer fuller fount,
For of all moisture mine is drain'd and dry,
Save that which falleth from mine eyes in tears.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXI.

Amor piangeva, ed io con lui talvolta.

HE CONGRATULATES BOCCACCIO ON HIS RETURN TO THE RIGHT PATH.

Love grieved, and I with him at times, to see
By what strange practices and cunning art,
You still continued from his fetters free,
From whom my feet were never far apart.
Since to the right way brought by God's decree,
Lifting my hands to heaven with pious heart,
I thank Him for his love and grace, for He
The soul-prayer of the just will never thwart:
And if, returning to the amorous strife,
Its fair desire to teach us to deny,
Hollows and hillocks in thy path abound,
'Tis but to prove to us with thorns how rife
The narrow way, the ascent how hard and high,
Where with true virtue man at last is crown'd.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXII.

Più di me lieta non si vede a terra.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

Than me more joyful never reach'd the shore
A vessel, by the winds long tost and tried,
Whose crew, late hopeless on the waters wide,
To a good God their thanks, now prostrate, pour;
Nor captive from his dungeon ever tore,
Around whose neck the noose of death was tied,
More glad than me, that weapon laid aside
Which to my lord hostility long bore.
All ye who honour love in poet strain,
To the good minstrel of the amorous lay
Return due praise, though once he went astray;
For greater glory is, in Heaven's blest reign,
Over one sinner saved, and higher praise,
Than e'en for ninety-nine of perfect ways. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXIII.

Il successor di Carlo, che la chioma.

ON THE MOVEMENT OF THE EMPEROR AGAINST THE INFIDELS, AND THE RETURN OF THE POPE TO ROME.

THE high successor of our Charles,* whose hair
The crown of his great ancestor adorns,
Already has ta'en arms, to bruise the horns
Of Babylon, and all her name who bear;
Christ's holy vicar with the honour'd load
Of keys and cloak, returning to his home,
Shall see Bologna and our noble Rome,
If no ill fortune bar his further road.
Best to your meek and high-born lamb belongs
To beat the fierce wolf down: so may it be
With all who loyalty and love deny.
Console at length your waiting country's wrongs,
And Rome's, who longs once more her spouse to see,
And gird for Christ the good sword on thy thigh.

MACGREGOR.

CANZONE 'II.

O aspettata in ciel, beata e bella.

IN SUPPORT OF THE PROPOSED CRUSADE AGAINST THE INFIDELS.

O SPIRIT wish'd and waited for in heaven,
That wearest gracefully our human clay,
Not as with loading sin and earthly stain,
Who lov'st our Lord's high bidding to obey,—
Henceforth to thee the way is plain and even
By which from hence to bliss we may attain.
To waft o'er yonder main
Thy bark, that bids the world adieu for aye
To seek a better strand,
The western winds their ready wings expand;
Which, through the dangers of that dusky way,
Where all deplore the first infringed command,
Will guide her safe, from primal bondage free,
Reckless to stop or stay,
To that true East, where she desires to be.

* Charlemagne.

Haply the faithful vows, and zealous prayers,
And pious tears by holy mortals shed,
Have come before the mercy-seat above:
Yet vows of ours but little can bestead,
Nor human orison such merit bears
As heavenly justice from its course can move.
But He, the King whom angels serve and love,
His gracious eyes hath turn'd upon the land
Where on the cross He died;
And a new Charlemagne hath qualified
To work the vengeance that on high was plann'd,
For whose delay so long hath Europe sigh'd.
Such mighty aid He brings his faithful spouse,
That at its sound the pride
Of Babylon with trembling terror bows.

All dwellers 'twixt the hills and wild Garonne,
The Rhodanus, and Rhine, and briny wave,
Are banded under red-cross banners brave;
And all who honour'd guerdon fain would have
From Pyrenees to the utmost west, are gone,
Leaving Iberia lorn of warriors keen.
And Britain, with the islands that are seen
Between the columns and the starry wain,
(Even to that land where shone
The far-famed lore of sacred Helicon,)
Diverse in language, weapon, garb and strain,
Of valour true, with pious zeal rush on.
What cause, what love, to this compared may be?
What spouse, or infant train
E'er kindled such a righteous enmity?

There is a portion of the world that lies
Far distant from the sun's all-cheering ray,
For ever wrapt in ice and gelid snows;
There under cloudy skies, in stinted day,
A people dwell, whose heart their clime outvies;
By nature framed stern foemen of repose.
Now new devotion in their bosom glows,
With Gothic fury now they grasp the sword.
Turk, Arab, and Chaldee,
With all between us and that sanguine sea,

Who trust in idol-gods, and slight the Lord,
Thou know'st how soon their feeble strength would yield;
A naked race, fearful and indolent,
Unused the brand to wield,
Whose distant aim upon the wind is sent.

Now is the time to shake the ancient yoke
From off our necks, and rend the veil aside
That long in darkness hath involved our eyes;
Let all whom Heaven with genius hath supplied,
And all who great Apollo's name invoke,
With fiery eloquence point out the prize,
With tongue and pen call on the brave to rise;
If Orpheus and Amphion, legends old,
No marvel cause in thee,
It were small wonder if Ausonia see
Collecting at thy call her children bold,
Lifting the spear of Jesus joyfully.
Nor, if our ancient mother judge aright,
Doth her rich page unfold
Such noble cause in any former fight.

Thou who hast scann'd, to heap a treasure fair,
Story of ancient day and modern time,
Soaring with earthly frame to heaven sublime,
Thou know'st, from Mars' bold son, her ruler prime,
To great Augustus, he whose waving hair
Was thrice in triumph wreathed with laurel green,
How Rome hath of her blood still lavish been
To right the woes of many an injured land;
And shall she now be slow,
Her gratitude, her piety to show?
In Christian zeal to buckle on the brand,
For Mary's glorious Son to deal the blow?
What ills the impious foeman must betide
Who trust in mortal hand,
If Christ himself lead on the adverse side!

And turn thy thoughts to Xerxes' rash emprize,
Who dared, in haste to tread our Europe's shore,
Insult the sea with bridge, and strange caprice;
And thou shalt see for husbands then no more
The Persian matrons robed in mournful guise,

And dyed with blood the seas of Salamis.
Nor sole example this:
(The ruin of that Eastern king's design),
That tells of victory nigh:
See Marathon, and stern Thermopylæ,
Closed by those few, and chieftain leonine,
And thousand deeds that blaze in history.
Then bow in thankfulness both heart and knee
Before his holy shrine,
Who such bright guerdon hath reserved for thee.

Thou shalt see Italy and that honour'd shore,
O song! a land debarr'd and hid from me
By neither flood nor hill!
But love alone, whose power hath virtue still
To witch, though all his wiles be vanity,
Nor Nature to avoid the snare hath skill.
Go, bid thy sisters hush their jealous fears,
For other loves there be
Than that blind boy, who causeth smiles and tears.
MISS * * * (FOSCOLO'S ESSAY).

O THOU, in heaven expected, bright and blest,
Spirit! who, from the common frailty free
Of human kind, in human form art drest,
God's handmaid, dutiful and dear to thee
Henceforth the pathway easy lies and plain,
By which, from earth, we bless eternal gain:
Lo! at the wish, to waft thy venturous prore
From the blind world it fain would leave behind
And seek that better shore,
Springs the sweet comfort of the western wind,
Which safe amid this dark and dangerous vale,
Where we our own, the primal sin deplore,
Right on shall guide her, from her old chains freed,
And, without let or fail,
Where havens her best hope, to the true East shall lead.

Haply the suppliant tears of pious men,
Their earnest vows and loving prayers at last
Unto the throne of heavenly grace have past;
Yet, breathed by human helplessness, ah! when

Had purest orison the skill and force
To bend eternal justice from its course?
But He, heaven's bounteous ruler from on high,
On the sad sacred spot, where erst He bled,
Will turn his pitying eye,
And through the spirit of our new Charles spread
Thirst of that vengeance, whose too long delay
From general Europe wakes the bitter sigh;
To his loved spouse such aid will He convey,
That, his dread voice to hear,
Proud Babylon shall shrink assail'd with secret fear.

All, by the gay Garonne, the kingly Rhine,
Between the blue Rhone and salt sea who dwell,
All in whose bosoms worth and honour swell,
Eagerly haste the Christian cross to join;
Spain of her warlike sons, from the far west
Unto the Pyrenee, pours forth her best:
Britannia and the Islands, which are found
Northward from Calpe, studding Ocean's breast,
E'en to that land renown'd
In the rich lore of sacred Helicon,
Various in arms and language, garb and guise,
With pious fury urge the bold emprize.
What love was e'er so just, so worthy, known?
Or when did holier flame
Kindle the mind of man to a more noble aim?

Far in the hardy north a land there lies,
Buried in thick-ribb'd ice and constant snows,
Where scant the days and clouded are the skies,
And seldom the bright sun his glad warmth throws;
There, enemy of peace by nature, springs
A people to whom death no terror brings;
If these, with new devotedness, we see
In Gothic fury baring the keen glaive,
Turk, Arab, and Chaldee!
All, who, between us and the Red Sea wave,
To heathen gods bow the idolatrous knee,
Arm and advance! we heed not your blind rage;
A naked race, timid in act, and slow,
Unskill'd the war to wage,
Whose far aim on the wind contrives a coward blow.

Now is the hour to free from the old yoke
Our gallèd necks, to rend the veil away
Too long permitted our dull sight to cloak:
Now too, should all whose breasts the heavenly ray
Of genius lights, exert its powers sublime,
And or in bold harangue, or burning rhyme,
Point the proud prize and fan the generous flame.
If Orpheus and Amphion credit claim,
Legends of distant time,
Less marvel 'twere, if, at thy earnest call,
Italia, with her children, should awake,
And wield the willing lance for Christ's dear sake.
Our ancient mother, read she right, in all
Her fortune's history ne'er
A cause of combat knew so glorious and so fair!

Thou, whose keen mind has every theme explored,
And truest ore from Time's rich treasury won,
On earthly pinion who hast heavenward soar'd,
Well knowest, from her founder, Mars' bold son,
To great Augustus, he, whose brow around
Thrice was the laurel green in triumph bound,
How Rome was ever lavish of her blood,
The right to vindicate, the weak redress;
And now, when gratitude,
When piety appeal, shall she do less
To avenge the injury and end the scorn
By blessed Mary's glorious offspring borne?
What fear we, while the heathen for success
Confide in human powers,
If, on the adverse side, be Christ, and his side ours?

Turn, too, when Xerxes our free shores to tread
Rush'd in hot haste, and dream'd the perilous main
With scourge and fetter to chastise and chain,
—What see'st? Wild wailing o'er their husbands dead,
Persia's pale matrons wrapt in weeds of woe,
And red with gore the gulf of Salamis!
To prove our triumph certain, to foreshow
The utter ruin of our Eastern foe,
No single instance this;
Miltiades and Marathon recall,

See, with his patriot few, Leonidas
Closing, Thermopylæ, thy bloody pass!
Like them to dare and do, to God let all
With heart and knee bow down,
Who for our arms and age has kept this great renown.

Thou shalt see Italy, that honour'd land,
Which from my eyes, O Song! nor seas, streams, heights,
So long have barr'd and bann'd,
But love alone, who with his haughty lights
The more allures me as he worse excites,
Till nature fails against his constant wiles.
Go then, and join thy comrades; not alone
Beneath fair female zone
Dwells Love, who, at his will, moves us to tears or smiles.

MACGREGOR.

CANZONE III.

Verdi panni, sanguigni, oscuri o persi.

WHETHER OR NOT HE SHOULD CEASE TO LOVE LAURA.

GREEN robes and red, purple, or brown, or gray
No lady ever wore,
Nor hair of gold in sunny tresses twined,
So beautiful as she, who spoils my mind
Of judgment, and from freedom's lofty path
So draws me with her that I may not bear
Any less heavy yoke.

And if indeed at times—for wisdom fails
Where martyrdom breeds doubt—
The soul should ever arm it to complain
Suddenly from each reinless rude desire
Her smile recalls, and razes from my heart
Every rash enterprise, while all disdain
Is soften'd in her sight.

For all that I have ever borne for love,
And still am doom'd to bear,
Till she who wounded it shall heal my heart,
Rejecting homage e'en while she invites,
Be vengeance done! but let not pride nor ire
'Gainst my humility the lovely pass
By which I enter'd bar.

The hour and day wherein I oped my eyes
On the bright black and white,
Which drive me thence where eager love impell'd
Where of that life which now my sorrow makes
New roots, and she in whom our age is proud,
Whom to behold without a tender awe
Needs heart of lead or wood.

The tear then from these eyes that frequent falls—
HE thus my pale cheek bathes
Who planted first within my fenceless flank
Love's shaft—diverts me not from my desire;
And in just part the proper sentence falls;
For her my spirit sighs, and worthy she
To staunch its secret wounds.

Spring from within me these conflicting thoughts,
To weary, wound myself,
Each a sure sword against its master turn'd:
Nor do I pray her to be therefore freed,
For less direct to heaven all other paths,
And to that glorious kingdom none can soar
Certes in sounder bark.

Benignant stars their bright companionship
Gave to the fortunate side
When came that fair birth on our nether world,
Its sole star since, who, as the laurel leaf,
The worth of honour fresh and fragrant keeps,
Where lightnings play not, nor ungrateful winds
Ever o'ersway its head.

Well know I that the hope to paint in verse
Her praises would but tire
The worthiest hand that e'er put forth its pen:
Who, in all Memory's richest cells, e'er saw
Such angel virtue so rare beauty shrined,
As in those eyes, twin symbols of all worth,
Sweet keys of my gone heart?

Lady, wherever shines the sun, than you
Love has no dearer pledge.

SESTINA II.

Giovane donna sott' un verde lauro.

THOUGH DESPAIRING OF PITY, HE VOWS TO LOVE HER UNTO DEATH.

A YOUTHFUL lady 'neath a laurel green
Was seated, fairer, colder than the snow
On which no sun has shone for many years:
Her sweet speech, her bright face, and flowing hair
So pleased, she yet is present to my eyes,
And aye must be, whatever fate prevail.

These my fond thoughts of her shall fade and fail
When foliage ceases on the laurel green;
Nor calm can be my heart, nor check'd these eyes
Until the fire shall freeze, or burns the snow:
Easier upon my head to count each hair
Than, ere that day shall dawn, the parting years.

But, since time flies, and roll the rapid years,
And death may, in the midst of life, assail,
With full brown locks, or scant and silver hair,
I still the shade of that sweet laurel green
Follow, through fiercest sun and deepest snow,
Till the last day shall close my weary eyes.

Oh! never sure were seen such brilliant eyes,
In this our age or in the older years,
Which mould and melt me, as the sun melts snow,
Into a stream of tears adown the vale,
Watering the hard roots of that laurel green,
Whose boughs are diamonds and gold whose hair.

I fear that Time my mien may change and hair,
Ere, with true pity touch'd, shall greet my eyes
My idol imaged in that laurel green:
For, unless memory err, through seven long years
Till now, full many a shore has heard my wail,
By night, at noon, in summer and in snow.

Thus fire within, without the cold, cold snow,
Alone, with these my thoughts and her bright hair,
Alway and everywhere I bear my ail,
Haply to find some mercy in the eyes
Of unborn nations and far future years,
If so long flourishes our laurel green.

The gold and topaz of the sun on snow
Are shamed by the bright hair above those eyes,
Searing the short green of my life's vain years.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXIV.

Quest' anima gentil che si diparte.

ON LAURA DANGEROUSLY ILL.

THAT graceful soul, in mercy call'd away
Before her time to bid the world farewell,
If welcomed as she ought in the realms of day,
In heaven's most blessèd regions sure shall dwell.
There between Mars and Venus if she stay,
Her sight the brightness of the sun will quell,
Because, her infinite beauty to survey,
The spirits of the blest will round her swell.
If she decide upon the fourth fair nest
Each of the three to dwindle will begin,
And she alone the fame of beauty win,
Nor e'en in the fifth circle may she rest;
Thence higher if she soar, I surely trust
Jove with all other stars in darkness will be thrust.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXV.

Quanto più m' avvicino al giorno estremo.

HE CONSOLES HIMSELF THAT HIS LIFE IS ADVANCING TO ITS CLOSE.

NEAR and more near as life's last period draws,
Which oft is hurried on by human woe,
I see the passing hours more swiftly flow,
And all my hopes in disappointment close.
And to my heart I say, amidst its throes,
"Not long shall we discourse of love below;
For this my earthly load, like new-fall'n snow
Fast melting, soon shall leave us to repose.
With it will sink in dust each towering hope,
Cherish'd so long within my faithful breast;
No more shall we resent, fear, smile, complain:
Then shall we clearly trace why some are blest,
Through deepest misery raised to Fortune's top,
And why so many sighs so oft are heaved in vain."

WRANGHAM.

THE nearer I approach my life's last day,
The certain day that limits human woe,
I better mark, in Time's swift silent flow,
How the fond hopes he brought all pass'd away.
Of love no longer—to myself I say—
We now may commune, for, as virgin snow,
The hard and heavy load we drag below
Dissolves and dies, ere rest in heaven repay.
And prostrate with it must each fair hope lie
Which here beguiled us and betray'd so long,
And joy, grief, fear and pride alike shall cease:
And then too shall we see with clearer eye
How oft we trod in weary ways and wrong,
And why so long in vain we sigh'd for peace. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXVI.

Già fiammeggiava l' amorosa stella.

LAURA, WHO IS ILL, APPEARS TO HIM IN A DREAM, AND ASSURES HIM THAT SHE STILL LIVES.

THROUGHOUT the orient now began to flame
The star of love; while o'er the northern sky
That, which has oft raised Juno's jealousy,
Pour'd forth its beauteous scintillating beam:
Beside her kindled hearth the housewife dame,
Half-dress'd, and slipshod, 'gan her distaff ply:
And now the wonted hour of woe drew nigh,
That wakes to tears the lover from his dream:
When my sweet hope unto my mind appear'd,
Not in the custom'd way unto my sight;
For grief had bathed my lids, and sleep had weigh'd;
Ah me, how changed that form by love endear'd!
"Why lose thy fortitude?" methought she said,
"These eyes not yet from thee withdraw their light."
NOTT.

ALREADY in the east the amorous star
Illumined heaven, while from her northern height
Great Juno's rival through the dusky night
Her beamy radiance shot. Returning care
Had roused th' industrious hag, with footstep bare,
And loins ungirt, the sleeping fire to light;
And lovers thrill'd that season of despight,
Which wont renew their tears, and wake despair.

When my soul's hope, now on the verge of fate,
(Not by th' accustomed way; for that in sleep
Was closed, and moist with griefs,) attain'd my heart.
Alas, how changed! "Servant, no longer weep,"
She seem'd to say; "resume thy wonted state:
Not yet thine eyes from mine are doom'd to part."

CHARLEMONT

ALREADY, in the east, the star of love
Was flaming, and that other in the north,
Which Juno's jealousy is wont to move,
Its beautiful and lustrous rays shot forth;
Barefooted and half clad, the housewife old
Had stirr'd her fire, and set herself to weave;
Each tender heart the thoughtful time controll'd
Which evermore the lover wakes to grieve,
When my fond hope, already at life's last,
Came to my heart, not by the wonted way,
Where sleep its seal, its dew where sorrow cast—
Alas! how changed—and said, or seem'd to say,
"Sight of these eyes not yet does Heaven refuse,
Then wherefore should thy tost heart courage lose?"

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXVII.

Apollo, s' ancor vive il bel desio.

HE COMPARES HER TO A LAUREL, WHICH HE SUPPLICATES APOLLO TO DEFEND.

O PHŒBUS, if that fond desire remains,
Which fired thy breast near the Thessalian wave;
If those bright tresses, which such pleasure gave,
Through lapse of years thy memory not disdains;
From sluggish frosts, from rude inclement rains,
Which last the while thy beams our region leave,
That honour'd sacred tree from peril save,
Whose name of dear accordance waked our pains!
And, by that amorous hope which soothed thy care,
What time expectant thou wert doom'd to sigh
Dispel those vapours which disturb our sky!
So shall we both behold our favorite fair
With wonder, seated on the grassy mead,
And forming with her arms herself a shade. NOTT.

If live the fair desire, Apollo, yet
Which fired thy spirit once on Peneus' shore,
And if the bright hair loved so well of yore
In lapse of years thou dost not now forget,
From the long frost, from seasons rude and keen,
Which last while hides itself thy kindling brow,
Defend this consecrate and honour'd bough,
Which snared thee erst, whose slave I since have been,
And, by the virtue of the love so dear
Which soothed, sustain'd thee in that early strife,
Our air from raw and lowering vapours clear:
So shall we see our lady, to new life
Restored, her seat upon the greensward take,
Where her own graceful arms a sweet shade o'er her make.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXVIII.

Solo e pensoso i più deserti campi.

HE SEEKS SOLITUDE, BUT LOVE FOLLOWS HIM EVERYWHERE.

Alone, and lost in thought, the desert glade
Measuring I roam with ling'ring steps and slow;
And still a watchful glance around me throw,
Anxious to shun the print of human tread:
No other means I find, no surer aid
From the world's prying eye to hide my woe:
So well my wild disorder'd gestures show,
And love-lorn looks, the fire within me bred,
That well I deem each mountain, wood and plain,
And river knows, what I from man conceal,
What dreary hues my life's fond prospects dim.
Yet whate'er wild or savage paths I've ta'en,
Where'er I wander, love attends me still,
Soft whisp'ring to my soul, and I to him. ANON. OX. 1795.

Alone, and pensive, near some desert shore,
Far from the haunts of men I love to stray,
And, cautiously, my distant path explore
Where never human footsteps mark'd the way.
Thus from the public gaze I strive to fly,
And to the winds alone my griefs impart;
While in my hollow cheek and haggard eye
Appears the fire that burns my inmost heart.

But ah, in vain to distant scenes I go;
No solitude my troubled thoughts allays.
Methinks e'en things inanimate must know
The flame that on my soul in secret preys;
Whilst Love, unconquer'd, with resistless sway
Still hovers round my path, still meets me on my way.

J. B. TAYLOR.

ALONE and pensive, the deserted plain,
With tardy pace and sad, I wander by;
And mine eyes o'er it rove, intent to fly
Where distant shores no trace of man retain;
No help save this I find, some cave to gain
Where never may intrude man's curious eye,
Lest on my brow, a stranger long to joy,
He read the secret fire which makes my pain
For here, methinks, the mountain and the flood,
Valley and forest the strange temper know
Of my sad life conceal'd from others' sight—
Yet where, where shall I find so wild a wood,
A way so rough that there Love cannot go
Communing with me the long day and night?

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXIX.

S' io credessi per morte essere scarco.

HE PRAYS FOR DEATH, BUT IN VAIN.

HAD I believed that Death could set me free
From the anxious amorous thoughts my peace that mar,
With these my own hands which yet stainless are,
Life had I loosed, long hateful grown to me.
Yet, for I fear 'twould but a passage be
From grief to grief, from old to other war,
Hither the dark shades my escape that bar,
I still remain, nor hope relief to see.
High time it surely is that he had sped
The fatal arrow from his pitiless bow,
In others' blood so often bathed and red;
And I of Love and Death have pray'd it so—
He listens not, but leaves me here half dead,
Nor cares to call me to himself below. MACGREGOR.

Oh! had I deem'd that Death had freed my soul
From Love's tormenting, overwhelming thought,
To crush its aching burthen I had sought,
My wearied life had hasten'd to its goal;
My shivering bark yet fear'd another shoal,
To find one tempest with another bought,
Thus poised 'twixt earth and heaven I dwell as naught,
Not daring to assume my life's control.
But sure 'tis time that Death's relentless bow
Had wing'd that fatal arrow to my heart,
So often bathed in life's dark crimson tide:
But though I crave he would this boon bestow,
He to my cheek his impress doth impart,
And yet o'erlooks me in his fearful stride. WOLLASTON.

CANZONE IV.

Si è debile il filo a cui s' attene.

HE GRIEVES IN ABSENCE FROM LAURA.

The thread on which my weary life depends
So fragile is and weak,
If none kind succour lends,
Soon 'neath the painful burden will it break;
Since doom'd to take my sad farewell of her,
In whom begins and ends
My bliss, one hope, to stir
My sinking spirit from its black despair,
Whispers, "Though lost awhile
That form so dear and fair,
Sad soul! the trial bear,
For thee e'en yet the sun may brightly shine,
And days more happy smile,
Once more the lost loved treasure may be thine."
This thought awhile sustains me, but again
To fail me and forsake in worse excess of pain.

Time flies apace: the silent hours and swift
So urge his journey on,
Short span to me is left
Even to think how quick to death I run;
Scarce, in the orient heaven, yon mountain crest
Smiles in the sun's first ray,
When, in the adverse west,
His long round run, we see his light decay.

So small of life the space,
So frail and clogg'd with woe,
To mortal man below,
That, when I find me from that beauteous face
Thus torn by fate's decree,
Unable at a wish with her to be,
So poor the profit that old comforts give,
I know not how I brook in such a state to live.

Each place offends, save where alone I see
Those eyes so sweet and bright,
Which still shall bear the key
Of the soft thoughts I hide from other sight;
And, though hard exile harder weighs on me,
Whatever mood betide,
I ask no theme beside,
For all is hateful that I since have seen.
What rivers and what heights,
What shores and seas between
Me rise and those twin lights,
Which made the storm and blackness of my days
One beautiful serene,
To which tormented Memory still strays:
Free as my life then pass'd from every care,
So hard and heavy seems my present lot to bear.

Alas! self-parleying thus, I but renew
The warm wish in my mind,
Which first within it grew
The day I left my better half behind:
If by long absence love is quench'd, then who
Guides me to the old bait,
Whence all my sorrows date?
Why rather not my lips in silence seal'd?
By finest crystal ne'er
Were hidden tints reveal'd
So faithfully and fair,
As my sad spirit naked lays and bare
Its every secret part,
And the wild sweetness thrilling in my heart,
Through eyes which, restlessly, o'erfraught with tears,
Seek her whose sight alone with instant gladness cheers.

Strange pleasure!—yet so often that within
The human heart to reign
Is found—to woo and win
Each new brief toy that men most sigh to gain:
And I am one from sadness who relief
So draw, as if it still
My study were to fill
These eyes with softness, and this heart with grief:
As weighs with me in chief
Nay rather with sole force,
The language and the light
Of those dear eyes to urge me on that course,
So where its fullest source
Long sorrow finds, I fix my often sight,
And thus my heart and eyes like sufferers be,
Which in love's path have been twin pioneers to me.

The golden tresses which should make, I ween,
The sun with envy pine;
And the sweet look serene,
Where love's own rays so bright and burning shine,
That, ere its time, they make my strength decline,
Each wise and truthful word,
Rare in the world, which late
She smiling gave, no more are seen or heard.
But this of all my fate
Is hardest to endure,
That here I am denied
The gentle greeting, angel-like and pure,
Which still to virtue's side
Inclined my heart with modest magic lure;
So that, in sooth, I nothing hope again
Of comfort more than this, how best to bear my pain.

And—with fit ecstacy my loss to mourn—
The soft hand's snowy charm,
The finely-rounded arm,
The winning ways, by turns, that quiet scorn,
Chaste anger, proud humility adorn,
The fair young breast that shrined
Intellect pure and high,
Are now all hid the rugged Alp behind.
My trust were vain to try
And see her ere I die,

For, though awhile he dare
Such dreams indulge, Hope ne'er can constant be,
But falls back in despair
Her, whom Heaven honours, there again to see,
Where virtue, courtesy in her best mix,
And where so oft I pray my future home to fix.

My Song! if thou shalt see,
Our common lady in that dear retreat,
We both may hope that she
Will stretch to thee her fair and fav'ring hand,
Whence I so far am bann'd;
—Touch, touch it not, but, reverent at her feet,
Tell her I will be there with earliest speed,
A man of flesh and blood, or else a spirit freed.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXX.

Orso, e' non furon mai fiumi nè stagni.

HE COMPLAINS OF THE VEIL AND HAND OF LAURA, THAT THEY DEPRIVE HIM OF THE SIGHT OF HER EYES.

ORSO, my friend, was never stream, nor lake,
Nor sea in whose broad lap all rivers fall,
Nor shadow of high hill, or wood, or wall,
Nor heaven-obscuring clouds which torrents make;
Nor other obstacles my grief so wake,
Whatever most that lovely face may pall,
As hiding the bright eyes which me enthrall,
That veil which bids my heart "Now burn or break,"
And, whether by humility or pride,
Their glance, extinguishing mine every joy,
Conducts me prematurely to my tomb:
Also my soul by one fair hand is tried,
Cunning and careful ever to annoy,
'Gainst my poor eyes a rock that has become. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXXI.

Io temo sì de' begli occhi l' assalto.

HE EXCUSES HIMSELF FOR HAVING SO LONG DELAYED TO VISIT HER.

So much I fear to encounter her bright eye,
Alway in which my death and Love reside,
That, as a child the rod, its glance I fly,
Though long the time has been since first I tried;

And ever since, so wearisome or high,
No place has been where strong will has not hied,
Her shunning, at whose sight my senses die,
And, cold as marble, I am laid aside:
Wherefore if I return to see you late,
Sure 'tis no fault, unworthy of excuse,
That from my death awhile I held aloof:
At all to turn to what men shun, their fate,
And from such fear my harass'd heart to loose,
Of its true faith are ample pledge and proof. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXXII.

S' amore o morte non dà qualche stroppio.

HE ASKS FROM A FRIEND THE LOAN OF THE WORKS OF ST. AUGUSTIN.

IF Love or Death no obstacle entwine
With the new web which here my fingers fold,
And if I 'scape from beauty's tyrant hold
While natural truth with truth reveal'd I join,
Perchance a work so double will be mine
Between our modern style and language old,
That (timidly I speak, with hope though bold)
Even to Rome its growing fame may shine:
But, since, our labour to perfect at last
Some of the blessed threads are absent yet
Which our dear father plentifully met,
Wherefore to me thy hands so close and fast
Against their use? Be prompt of aid and free,
And rich our harvest of fair things shall be. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXXIII.

Quando dal proprio sito si rimove.

WHEN LAURA DEPARTS, THE HEAVENS GROW DARK WITH STORMS.

WHEN from its proper soil the tree is moved
Which Phœbus loved erewhile in human form,
Grim Vulcan at his labour sighs and sweats,
Renewing ever the dread bolts of Jove,
Who thunders now, now speaks in snow and rain,
Nor Julius honoureth than Janus more:
Earth moans, and far from us the sun retires
Since his dear mistress here no more is seen.

Then Mars and Saturn, cruel stars, resume
Their hostile rage: Orion arm'd with clouds
The helm and sails of storm-tost seamen breaks.
To Neptune and to Juno and to us
Vext Æolus proves his power, and makes us feel
How parts the fair face angels long expect. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXXIV.

Ma poi che 'l dolce riso umile e piano.

HER RETURN GLADDENS THE EARTH AND CALMS THE SKY.

BUT when her sweet smile, modest and benign,
No longer hides from us its beauties rare,
At the spent forge his stout and sinewy arms
Plieth that old Sicilian smith in vain,
For from the hands of Jove his bolts are taken
Temper'd in Ætna to extremest proof;
And his cold sister by degrees grows calm
And genial in Apollo's kindling beams.
Moves from the rosy west a summer breath,
Which safe and easy wafts the seaward bark,
And wakes the sweet flowers in each grassy mead.
Malignant stars on every side depart,
Dispersed before that bright enchanting face,
For which already many tears are shed. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXXV.

Il figliuol di Latona avea già nove.

THE GRIEF OF PHŒBUS AT THE LOSS OF HIS LOVE.

NINE times already had Latona's son
Look'd from the highest balcony of heaven
For her, who whilom waked his sighs in vain,
And sighs as vain now wakes in other breasts;
Then seeking wearily, nor knowing where
She dwelt, or far or near, and why delay'd,
He show'd himself to us as one, insane
For grief, who cannot find some loved lost thing:
And thus, for clouds of sorrow held aloof,
Saw not the fair face turn, which, if I live,
In many a page shall praised and honour'd be;

The misery of her loss so changed her mien
That her bright eyes were dimm'd, for once, with tears,
Thereon its former gloom the air resumed. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXXVI.

Quel che 'n Tessaglia ebbe le man sì pronte.

SOME HAVE WEPT FOR THEIR WORST ENEMIES, BUT LAURA DEIGNS HIM NOT A SINGLE TEAR.

HE who for empire at Pharsalia threw,
Reddening its beauteous plain with civil gore,
As Pompey's corse his conquering soldiers bore,
Wept when the well-known features met his view:
The shepherd youth, who fierce Goliath slew,
Had long rebellious children to deplore,
And bent, in generous grief, the brave Saul o'er
His shame and fall when proud Gilboa knew:
But you, whose cheek with pity never paled,
Who still have shields at hand to guard you well
Against Love's bow, which shoots its darts in vain,
Behold me by a thousand deaths assail'd,
And yet no tears of thine compassion tell,
But in those bright eyes anger and disdain. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXXVII.

Il mio avversario, in cui veder solete.

LAURA AT HER LOOKING-GLASS.

MY foe, in whom you see your own bright eyes,
Adored by Love and Heaven with honour due,
With beauties not its own enamours you,
Sweeter and happier than in mortal guise.
Me, by its counsel, lady, from your breast,
My chosen cherish'd home, your scorn expell'd
In wretched banishment, perchance not held
Worthy to dwell where you alone should rest.
But were I fasten'd there with strongest keys,
That mirror should not make you, at my cost,
Severe and proud yourself alone to please.
Remember how Narcissus erst was lost!
His course and thine to one conclusion lead,
Of flower so fair though worthless here the mead.
MACGREGOR.

My mirror'd foe reflects, alas! so fair
Those eyes which Heaven and Love have honour'd too!
Yet not his charms thou dost enamour'd view,
But all thine own, and they beyond compare:
O lady! thou hast chased me at its prayer
From thy heart's throne, where I so fondly grew;
O wretched exile! though too well I knew
A reign with thee I were unfit to share.
But were I ever fix'd thy bosom's mate,
A flattering mirror should not me supplant,
And make thee scorn me in thy self-delight;
Thou surely must recall Narcissus' fate,
But if like him thy doom should thee enchant,
What mead were worthy of a flower so bright?

WOLLASTON.

SONNET XXXVIII.

L' oro e le perle, e i fior vermigli e i bianchi.

HE INVEIGHS AGAINST LAURA'S MIRROR, BECAUSE IT MAKES HER FORGET HIM.

Those golden tresses, teeth of pearly white,
Those cheeks' fair roses blooming to decay,
Do in their beauty to my soul convey
The poison'd arrows from my aching sight.
Thus sad and briefly must my days take flight,
For life with woe not long on earth will stay;
But more I blame that mirror's flattering sway,
Which thou hast wearied with thy self-delight.
Its power my bosom's sovereign too hath still'd,
Who pray'd thee in my suit—now he is mute,
Since thou art captured by thyself alone:
Death's seeds it hath within my heart instill'd,
For Lethe's stream its form doth constitute,
And makes thee lose each image but thine own. WOLLASTON.

The gold and pearls, the lily and the rose
Which weak and dry in winter wont to be,
Are rank and poisonous arrow-shafts to me,
As my sore-stricken bosom aptly shows:
Thus all my days now sadly shortly close,
For seldom with great grief long years agree;
But in that fatal glass most blame I see,
That weary with your oft self-liking grows.

It on my lord placed silence, when my suit
He would have urged, but, seeing your desire
End in yourself alone, he soon was mute.
'T was fashion'd in hell's wave and o'er its fire,
And tinted in eternal Lethe: thence
The spring and secret of my death commence. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXXIX.

Io sentia dentr' al cor già venir meno.

HE DESIRES AGAIN TO GAZE ON THE EYES OF LAURA.

I NOW perceived that from within me fled
Those spirits to which you their being lend;
And since by nature's dictates to defend
Themselves from death all animals are made,
The reins I loosed, with which Desire I stay'd,
And sent him on his way without a friend;
There whither day and night my course he'd bend,
Though still from thence by me reluctant led.
And me ashamed and slow along he drew
To see your eyes their matchless influence shower,
Which much I shun, afraid to give you pain.
Yet for myself this once I'll live; such power
Has o'er this wayward life one look from you:—
Then die, unless Desire prevails again. ANON. Ox. 1795.

BECAUSE the powers that take their life from you
Already had I felt within decay,
And because Nature, death to shield or slay,
Arms every animal with instinct true,
To my long-curb'd desire the rein I threw,
And turn'd it in the old forgotten way,
Where fondly it invites me night and day,
Though 'gainst its will, another I pursue.
And thus it led me back, ashamed and slow,
To see those eyes with love's own lustre rife
Which I am watchful never to offend:
Thus may I live perchance awhile below;
One glance of yours such power has o'er my life
Which sure, if I oppose desire, shall end. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XL.

Se mai foco per foco non si spense.

HIS HEART IS ALL IN FLAMES, BUT HIS TONGUE IS MUTE, IN HER PRESENCE.

If fire was never yet by fire subdued,
If never flood fell dry by frequent rain,
But, like to like, if each by other gain,
And contraries are often mutual food;
Love, who our thoughts controllest in each mood,
Through whom two bodies thus one soul sustain,
How, why in her, with such unusual strain
Make the want less by wishes long renewed?
Perchance, as falleth the broad Nile from high,
Deafening with his great voice all nature round,
And as the sun still dazzles the fix'd eye,
So with itself desire in discord found
Loses in its impetuous object force,
As the too frequent spur oft checks the course. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XLI.

Perch' io t' abbia guardato di menzogna.

IN HER PRESENCE HE CAN NEITHER SPEAK, WEEP, NOR SIGH.

Although from falsehood I did thee restrain
With all my power, and paid thee honour due,
Ungrateful tongue; yet never did accrue
Honour from thee, but shame, and fierce disdain:
Most art thou cold, when most I want the strain
Thy aid should lend while I for pity sue;
And all thy utterance is imperfect too,
When thou dost speak, and as the dreamer's vain.
Ye too, sad tears, throughout each lingering night
Upon me wait, when I alone would stay;
But, needed by my peace, you take your flight:
And, all so prompt anguish and grief t' impart,
Ye sighs, then slow, and broken breathe your way:
My looks alone truly reveal my heart. NOTT.

With all my power, lest falsehood should invade,
I guarded thee and still thy honour sought,
Ungrateful tongue! who honour ne'er hast brought,
But still my care with rage and shame repaid:

For, though to me most requisite, thine aid,
When mercy I would ask, availeth nought,
Still cold and mute, and e'en to words if wrought
They seem as sounds in sleep by dreamers made.
And ye, sad tears, o' nights, when I would fain
Be left alone, my sure companions, flow,
But, summon'd for my peace, ye soon depart:
Ye too, mine anguish'd sighs, so prompt to pain,
Then breathe before her brokenly and slow,
And my face only speaks my suffering heart. MACGREGOR.

CANZONE V.

Nella stagion che 'l ciel rapido inchina.

NIGHT BRINGS REPOSE TO OTHERS, BUT NOT TO HIM.

IN that still season, when the rapid sun
Drives down the west, and daylight flies to greet
Nations that haply wait his kindling flame;
In some strange land, alone, her weary feet
The time-worn pilgrim finds, with toil fordone,
Yet but the more speeds on her languid frame;
Her solitude the same,
When night has closed around;
Yet has the wanderer found
A deep though short forgetfulness at last
Of every woe, and every labour past.
But ah! my grief, that with each moment grows,
As fast, and yet more fast,
Day urges on, is heaviest at its close.

When Phœbus rolls his everlasting wheels
To give night room; and from encircling wood,
Broader and broader yet descends the shade;
The labourer arms him for his evening trade,
And all the weight his burthen'd heart conceals
Lightens with glad discourse or descant rude;
Then spreads his board with food,
Such as the forest hoar
To our first fathers bore,
By us disdain'd, yet praised in hall and bower.

But, let who will the cup of joyance pour,
I never knew, I will not say of mirth,
But of repose, an hour,
When Phœbus leaves, and stars salute the earth.

Yon shepherd, when the mighty star of day
He sees descending to its western bed,
And the wide Orient all with shade embrown'd,
Takes his old crook, and from the fountain head,
Green mead, and beechen bower, pursues his way,
Calling, with welcome voice, his flocks around;
Then far from human sound,
Some desert cave he strows
With leaves and verdant boughs,
And lays him down, without a thought, to sleep.
Ah, cruel Love!—then dost thou bid me keep
My idle chase, the airy steps pursuing
Of her I ever weep,
Who flies me still, my endless toil renewing.

E'en the rude seaman, in some cave confined,
Pillows his head, as daylight quits the scene,
On the hard deck, with vilest mat o'erspread;
And when the Sun in orient wave serene
Bathes his resplendent front, and leaves behind
Those antique pillars of his boundless bed;
Forgetfulness has shed
O'er man, and beast, and flower,
Her mild restoring power:
But my determined grief finds no repose;
And every day but aggravates the woes
Of that remorseless flood, that, ten long years,
Flowing, yet ever flows,
Nor know I what can check its ceaseless tears. MERIVALE.

WHAT time towards the western skies
The sun with parting radiance flies,
And other climes gilds with expected light,
Some aged pilgrim dame who strays
Alone, fatigued, through pathless ways,
Hastens her step, and dreads the approach of night.
Then, the day's journey o'er, she'll steep
Her sense awhile in grateful sleep;

Forgetting all the pain, and peril past;
But I, alas! find no repose,
Each sun to me brings added woes,
While light's eternal orb rolls from us fast.

When the sun's wheels no longer glow,
And hills their lengthen'd shadows throw,
The hind collects his tools, and carols gay;
Then spreads his board with frugal fare,
Such as those homely acorns were,
Which all revere, yet casting them away.
Let those, who pleasure can enjoy,
In cheerfulness their hours employ;
While I, of all earth's wretches most unblest,
Whether the sun fierce darts his beams,
Whether the moon more mildly gleams,
Taste no delight, no momentary rest!

When the swain views the star of day
Quench in the pillowing waves its ray,
And scatter darkness o'er the eastern skies;
Rising, his custom'd crook he takes,
The beech-wood, fountain, plain forsakes,
As calmly homeward with his flock he hies
Remote from man, then on his bed
In cot, or cave, with fresh leaves spread,
He courts soft slumber, and suspense from care;
While thou, fell Love, bidst me pursue
That voice, those footsteps which subdue
My soul; yet movest not th' obdurate fair!

Lock'd in some bay, to taste repose
On the hard deck, the sailor throws
His coarse garb o'er him, when the car of light
Granada, with Marocco leaves,
The Pillars famed, Iberia's waves,
And the world's hush'd, and all its face, in night.
But never will my sorrows cease,
Successive days their sum increase,
Though just ten annual suns have mark'd my pain:
Say, to this bosom's poignant grief
Who shall administer relief?
Say, who at length shall free me from my chain?

And, since there's comfort in the strain,
I see at eve along each plain,
And furrow'd hill, the unyoked team return:
Why at that hour will no one stay
My sighs, or bear my yoke away?
Why bathed in tears must I unceasing mourn?
Wretch that I was, to fix my sight
First on that face with such delight,
Till on my thought its charms were strong imprest,
Which force shall not efface, nor art,
Ere from this frame my soul dispart!
Nor know I then if passion's votaries rest.

O hasty strain, devoid of worth,
Sad as the bard who brought thee forth,
Show not thyself, be with the world at strife,
From nook to nook indulge thy grief;
While thy lorn parent seeks relief,
Nursing that amorous flame which feeds his life! NOTT.

SONNET XLII.

Poco era ad appressarsi agli occhi miei.

SUCH ARE HIS SUFFERINGS THAT HE ENVIES THE INSENSIBILITY OF MARBLE.

HAD but the light which dazzled them afar
Drawn but a little nearer to mine eyes,
Methinks I would have wholly changed my form,
Even as in Thessaly her form she changed:
But if I cannot lose myself in her
More than I have—small mercy though it won—
I would to-day in aspect thoughtful be,
Of harder stone than chisel ever wrought,
Of adamant, or marble cold and white,
Perchance through terror, or of jasper rare
And therefore prized by the blind greedy crowd.
Then were I free from this hard heavy yoke
Which makes me envy Atlas, old and worn,
Who with his shoulders brings Morocco night. ANON

MADRIGALE I.

Non al suo amante più Diana piacque.

ANYTHING THAT REMINDS HIM OF LAURA RENEWS HIS TORMENTS.

NOT Dian to her lover was more dear,
When fortune 'mid the waters cold and clear,
Gave him her naked beauties all to see,
Than seem'd the rustic ruddy nymph to me,
Who, in yon flashing stream, the light veil laved,
Whence Laura's lovely tresses lately waved;
I saw, and through me felt an amorous chill,
Though summer burn, to tremble and to thrill.

MACGREGOR.

CANZONE VI.

Spirto gentil che quelle membra reggi.

TO RIENZI, BESEECHING HIM TO RESTORE TO ROME HER ANCIENT LIBERTY.

SPIRIT heroic! who with fire divine
Kindlest those limbs, awhile which pilgrim hold
On earth a Chieftain, gracious, wise, and bold;
Since, rightly, now the rod of state is thine
Rome and her wandering children to confine,
And yet reclaim her to the old good way:
To thee I speak, for elsewhere not a ray
Of virtue can I find, extinct below,
Nor one who feels of evil deeds the shame.
Why Italy still waits, and what her aim
I know not, callous to her proper woe,
Indolent, aged, slow,
Still will she sleep? Is none to rouse her found?
Oh! that my wakening hands were through her tresses wound.

So grievous is the spell, the trance so deep,
Loud though we call, my hope is faint that e'er
She yet will waken from her heavy sleep:
But not, methinks, without some better end
Was this our Rome entrusted to thy care,
Who surest may revive and best defend.
Fearlessly then upon that reverend head,
'Mid her dishevell'd locks, thy fingers spread,
And lift at length the sluggard from the dust;
I, day and night, who her prostration mourn,
For this, in thee, have fix'd my certain trust,

That, if her sons yet turn,
And their eyes ever to true honour raise,
The glory is reserved for thy illustrious days!

Her ancient walls, which still with fear and love
The world admires, whene'er it calls to mind
The days of Eld, and turns to look behind;
Her hoar and cavern'd monuments above
The dust of men, whose fame, until the world
In dissolution sink, can never fail;
Her all, that in one ruin now lies hurl'd,
Hopes to have heal'd by thee its every ail.
O faithful Brutus! noble Scipios dead!
To you what triumph, where ye now are blest,
If of our worthy choice the fame have spread:
And how his laurell'd crest,
Will old Fabricius rear, with joy elate,
That his own Rome again shall beauteous be and great!

And, if for things of earth its care Heaven show,
The souls who dwell above in joy and peace,
And their mere mortal frames have left below,
Implore thee this long civil strife may cease,
Which kills all confidence, nips every good,
Which bars the way to many a roof, where men
Once holy, hospitable lived, the den
Of fearless rapine now and frequent blood,
Whose doors to virtue only are denied.
While beneath plunder'd Saints, in outraged fanes
Plots Faction, and Revenge the altar stains;
And, contrast sad and wide,
The very bells which sweetly wont to fling
Summons to prayer and praise now Battle's tocsin ring!

Pale weeping women, and a friendless crowd
Of tender years, infirm and desolate Age,
Which hates itself and its superfluous days,
With each blest order to religion vow'd,
Whom works of love through lives of want engage,
To thee for help their hands and voices raise;
While our poor panic-stricken land displays
The thousand wounds which now so mar her frame,
That e'en from foes compassion they command;
Or more if Christendom thy care may claim,
Lo! God's own house on fire, while not a hand

Moves to subdue the flame:
—Heal thou these wounds, this feverish tumult end,
And on the holy work Heaven's blessing shall descend!

Often against our marble Column high
Wolf, Lion, Bear, proud Eagle, and base Snake
Even to their own injury insult shower;
Lifts against thee and theirs her mournful cry,
The noble Dame who calls thee here to break
Away the evil weeds which will not flower.
A thousand years and more! and gallant men
There fix'd her seat in beauty and in power;
The breed of patriot hearts has fail'd since then!
And, in their stead, upstart and haughty now,
A race, which ne'er to her in reverence bends,
Her husband, father thou!
Like care from thee and counsel she attends,
As o'er his other works the Sire of all extends.

'Tis seldom e'en that with our fairest scheme
Some adverse fortune will not mix, and mar
With instant ill ambition's noblest dreams;
But thou, once ta'en thy path, so walk that I
May pardon her past faults, great as they are,
If now at least she give herself the lie.
For never, in all memory, as to thee,
To mortal man so sure and straight the way
Of everlasting honour open lay,
For thine the power and will, if right I see,
To lift our empire to its old proud state.
Let this thy glory be!
They succour'd her when young, and strong, and great,
He, in her weak old age, warded the stroke of Fate.

Forth on thy way! my Song, and, where the bold
Tarpeian lifts his brow, shouldst thou behold,
Of others' weal more thoughtful than his own,
The chief, by general Italy revered,
Tell him from me, to whom he is but known
As one to Virtue and by Fame endear'd,
Till stamp'd upon his heart the sad truth be,
That, day by day to thee,
With suppliant attitude and streaming eyes,
For justice and relief our seven-hill'd city cries.

MACGREGOR.

MADRIGALE II.

Perchè al viso d'Amor portava insegna.

A LOVE JOURNEY—DANGER IN THE PATH—HE TURNS BACK.

BRIGHT in whose face Love's conquering ensign stream'd,
A foreign fair so won me, young and vain,
That of her sex all others worthless seem'd:
Her as I follow'd o'er the verdant plain,
I heard a loud voice speaking from afar,
"How lost in these lone woods his footsteps are!"
Then paused I, and, beneath the tall beech shade,
All wrapt in thought, around me well survey'd,
Till, seeing how much danger block'd my way,
Homeward I turn'd me though at noon of day. MACGREGOR.

BALLATA III.

Quel foco, ch' io pensai che fosse spento.

HE THOUGHT HIMSELF FREE, BUT FINDS THAT HE IS MORE THAN EVER ENTHRALLED BY LOVE.

THAT fire for ever which I thought at rest,
Quench'd in the chill blood of my ripen'd years,
Awakes new flames and torment in my breast.
Its sparks were never all, from what I see,
Extinct, but merely slumbering, smoulder'd o'er;
Haply this second error worse may be,
For, by the tears, which I, in torrents, pour,
Grief, through these eyes, distill'd from my heart's core,
Which holds within itself the spark and bait,
Remains not as it was, but grows more great.
What fire, save mine, had not been quench'd and kill'd
Beneath the flood these sad eyes ceaseless shed?
Struggling 'mid opposites—so Love has will'd—
Now here, now there, my vain life must be led,
For in so many ways his snares are spread,
When most I hope him from my heart expell'd
Then most of her fair face its slave I'm held. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XLIII.

Se col cieco desir che 'l cor distrugge.

BLIGHTED HOPE.

EITHER that blind desire, which life destroys,
Counting the hours, deceives my misery,

Or, even while yet I speak, the moment flies,
Promised at once to pity and to me.
Alas! what baneful shade o'erhangs and dries
The seed so near its full maturity?
'Twixt me and hope what brazen walls arise?
From murderous wolves not even my fold is free.
Ah, woe is me! Too clearly now I find
That felon Love, to aggravate my pain,
Mine easy heart hath thus to hope inclined;
And now the maxim sage I call to mind,
That mortal bliss must doubtful still remain
Till death from earthly bonds the soul unbind.

CHARLEMONT.

COUNTING the hours, lest I myself mislead
By blind desire wherewith my heart is torn,
E'en while I speak away the moments speed,
To me and pity which alike were sworn.
What shade so cruel as to blight the seed
Whence the wish'd fruitage should so soon be born?
What beast within my fold has leap'd to feed?
What wall is built between the hand and corn?
Alas! I know not, but, if right I guess,
Love to such joyful hope has only led
To plunge my weary life in worse distress;
And I remember now what once I read,
Until the moment of his full release
Man's bliss begins not, nor his troubles cease. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XLIV.

Mie venture al venir son tarde e pigre.

FEW ARE THE SWEETS, BUT MANY THE BITTERS OF LOVE.

EVER my hap is slack and slow in coming,
Desire increasing, ay my hope uncertain
With doubtful love, that but increaseth pain;
For, tiger-like, so swift it is in parting.
Alas! the snow black shall it be and scalding,
The sea waterless, and fish upon the mountain,
The Thames shall back return into his fountain,
And where he rose the sun shall take [his] lodging,
Ere I in this find peace or quietness;
Or that Love, or my Lady, right wisely,
Leave to conspire against me wrongfully.

And if I have, after such bitterness,
One drop of sweet, my mouth is out of taste,
That all my trust and travail is but waste. WYATT.

LATE to arrive my fortunes are and slow—
Hopes are unsure, desires ascend and swell,
Suspense, expectancy in me rebel—
But swifter to depart than tigers go.
Tepid and dark shall be the cold pure snow,
The ocean dry, its fish on mountains dwell,
The sun set in the East, by that old well
Alike whence Tigris and Euphrates flow,
Ere in this strife I peace or truce shall find,
Ere Love or Laura practise kinder ways,
Sworn friends, against me wrongfully combined.
After such bitters, if some sweet allays,
Balk'd by long fasts my palate spurns the fare,
Sole grace from them that falleth to my share. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XLV.

La guancia che fu già piangendo stanca.

TO HIS FRIEND AGAPITO, WITH A PRESENT.

THY weary cheek that channell'd sorrow shows,
My much-loved lord, upon the one repose;
More careful of thyself against Love be,
Tyrant who smiles his votaries wan to see;
And with the other close the left-hand path
Too easy entrance where his message hath;
In sun and storm thyself the same display,
Because time faileth for the lengthen'd way.
And, with the third, drink of the precious herb
Which purges every thought that would disturb,
Sweet in the end though sour at first in taste:
But me enshrine where your best joys are placed,
So that I fear not the grim bark of Styx,
If with such prayer of mine pride do not mix.
MACGREGOR.

BALLATA IV.

Perchè quel che mi trasse ad amar prima.

HE WILL ALWAYS LOVE HER, THOUGH DENIED THE SIGHT OF HER.

THOUGH cruelty denies my view
Those charms which led me first to love;
To passion yet will I be true,
Nor shall my will rebellious prove.
Amid the curls of golden hair
That wave those beauteous temples round,
Cupid spread craftily the snare
With which my captive heart he bound:
And from those eyes he caught the ray
Which thaw'd the ice that fenced my breast,
Chasing all other thoughts away,
With brightness suddenly imprest.
But now that hair of sunny gleam,
Ah me! is ravish'd from my sight;
Those beauteous eyes withdraw their beam,
And change to sadness past delight.
A glorious death by all is prized;
'Tis death alone shall break my chain:
Oh! be Love's timid wail despised.
Lovers should nobly suffer pain. NOTT.

THOUGH barr'd from all which led me first to love
By coldness or caprice,
Not yet from its firm bent can passion cease!
The snare was set amid those threads of gold,
To which Love bound me fast;
And from those bright eyes melted the long cold
Within my heart that pass'd;
So sweet the spell their sudden splendour cast,
Its single memory still
Deprives my soul of every other will.
But now, alas! from me of that fine hair
Is ravish'd the dear sight;
The lost light of those twin stars, chaste as fair,
Saddens me in her flight;
But, since a glorious death wins honour bright,
By death, and not through grief,
Love from such chain shall give at last relief. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XLVI.

L' arbor gentil che forte amai moll' anni.

IMPRECATION AGAINST THE LAUREL.

THE graceful tree I loved so long and well,
Ere its fair boughs in scorn my flame declined,
Beneath its shade encouraged my poor mind
To bud and bloom, and 'mid its sorrow swell.
But now, my heart secure from such a spell,
Alas, from friendly it has grown unkind!
My thoughts entirely to one end confined,
Their painful sufferings how I still may tell.
What should he say, the sighing slave of love,
To whom my later rhymes gave hope of bliss,
Who for that laurel has lost all—but this?
May poet never pluck thee more, nor Jove
Exempt; but may the sun still hold in hate
On each green leaf till blight and blackness wait.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XLVII.

Benedetto sia 'l giorno e 'l mese e l' anno.

HE BLESSES ALL THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS PASSION.

BLEST be the day, and blest the month, the year,
The spring, the hour, the very moment blest,
The lovely scene, the spot, where first oppress'd
I sunk, of two bright eyes the prisoner:
And blest the first soft pang, to me most dear,
Which thrill'd my heart, when Love became its guest;
And blest the bow, the shafts which pierced my breast,
And even the wounds, which bosom'd thence I bear.
Blest too the strains which, pour'd through glade and grove,
Have made the woodlands echo with her name;
The sighs, the tears, the languishment, the love:
And blest those sonnets, sources of my fame;
And blest that thought—Oh! never to remove!
Which turns to her alone, from her alone which came.

WRANGHAM.

BLEST be the year, the month, the hour, the day,
The season and the time, and point of space,
And blest the beauteous country and the place
Where first of two bright eyes I felt the sway:

Blest the sweet pain of which I was the prey,
When newly doom'd Love's sovereign law to embrace
And blest the bow and shaft to which I trace,
The wound that to my inmost heart found way:
Blest be the ceaseless accents of my tongue,
Unwearied breathing my loved lady's name:
Blest my fond wishes, sighs, and tears, and pains:
Blest be the lays in which her praise I sung,
That on all sides acquired to her fair fame,
And blest my thoughts! for o'er them all she reigns.

DACRE.

SONNET XLVIII.

Padre del ciel, dopo i perduti giorni.

CONSCIOUS OF HIS FOLLY, HE PRAYS GOD TO TURN HIM TO A BETTER LIFE.

FATHER of heaven! after the days misspent,
After the nights of wild tumultuous thought,
In that fierce passion's strong entanglement,
One, for my peace too lovely fair, had wrought;
Vouchsafe that, by thy grace, my spirit bent
On nobler aims, to holier ways be brought;
That so my foe, spreading with dark intent
His mortal snares, be foil'd, and held at nought.
E'en now th' eleventh year its course fulfils,
That I have bow'd me to the tyranny
Relentless most to fealty most tried.
Have mercy, Lord! on my unworthy ills:
Fix all my thoughts in contemplation high;
How on the cross this day a Saviour died.

DACRE.

FATHER of heaven! despite my days all lost,
Despite my nights in doting folly spent
With that fierce passion which my bosom rent
At sight of her, too lovely for my cost;
Vouchsafe at length that, by thy grace, I turn
To wiser life, and enterprise more fair,
So that my cruel foe, in vain his snare
Set for my soul, may his defeat discern.
Already, Lord, the eleventh year circling wanes
Since first beneath his tyrant yoke I fell
Who still is fiercest where we least rebel:
Pity my undeserved and lingering pains,

To holier thoughts my wandering sense restore,
How on this day his cross thy Son our Saviour bore.

MACGREGOR.

BALLATA V.

Volgendo gli occhi al mio novo colore.

HER KIND SALUTE SAVED HIM FROM DEATH.

LATE as those eyes on my sunk cheek inclined,
Whose paleness to the world seems of the grave,
Compassion moved you to that greeting kind,
Whose soft smile to my worn heart spirit gave.
The poor frail life which yet to me is left
Was of your beauteous eyes the liberal gift,
And of that voice angelical and mild;
My present state derived from them I see;
As the rod quickens the slow sullen child,
So waken'd they the sleeping soul in me.
Thus, Lady, of my true heart both the keys
You hold in hand, and yet your captive please:
Ready to sail wherever winds may blow,
By me most prized whate'er to you I owe. MACGREGOR.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC

SONNET XLIX.

Se voi poteste per turbati segni.

HE ENTREATS LAURA NOT TO HATE THE HEART FROM WHICH SHE CAN NEVER BE ABSENT.

IF, but by angry and disdainful sign,
By the averted head and downcast sight,
By readiness beyond thy sex for flight,
Deaf to all pure and worthy prayers of mine,
Thou canst, by these or other arts of thine,
'Scape from my breast—where Love on slip so slight
Grafts every day new boughs—of such despite
A fitting cause I then might well divine:
For gentle plant in arid soil to be
Seems little suited: so it better were,
And this e'en nature dictates, thence to stir.
But since thy destiny prohibits thee
Elsewhere to dwell, be this at least thy care
Not always to sojourn in hatred there. MACGREGOR.

SONNET L.

Lasso, che mal accorto fui da prima.

HE PRAYS LOVE TO KINDLE ALSO IN HER THE FLAME BY WHICH HE IS UNCEASINGLY TORMENTED.

ALAS! this heart by me was little known
In those first days when Love its depths explored,
Where by degrees he made himself the lord
Of my whole life, and claim'd it as his own:
I did not think that, through his power alone,
A heart time-steel'd, and so with valour stored,
Such proof of failing firmness could afford,
And fell by wrong self-confidence o'erthrown.
Henceforward all defence too late will come,
Save this, to prove, enough or little, here
If to these mortal prayers Love lend his ear.
Not now my prayer—nor can such e'er have room—
That with more mercy he consume my heart,
But in the fire that she may bear her part. MACGREGOR.

SESTINA III.

L'aere gravato, e l' importuna nebbia.

HE COMPARES LAURA TO WINTER, AND FORESEES THAT SHE WILL ALWAYS BE THE SAME.

THE overchargèd air, the impending cloud,
Compress'd together by impetuous winds,
Must presently discharge themselves in rain;
Already as of crystal are the streams,
And, for the fine grass late that clothed the vales,
Is nothing now but the hoar frost and ice.

And I, within my heart, more cold than ice,
Of heavy thoughts have such a hovering cloud,
As sometimes rears itself in these our vales,
Lowly, and landlock'd against amorous winds,
Environ'd everywhere with stagnant streams,
When falls from soft'ning heaven the smaller rain.

Lasts but a brief while every heavy rain;
And summer melts away the snows and ice,
When proudly roll th' accumulated streams:

Nor ever hid the heavens so thick a cloud,
Which, overtaken by the furious winds,
Fled not from the first hills and quiet vales.

But ah! what profit me the flowering vales?
Alike I mourn in sunshine and in rain,
Suffering the same in warm and wintry winds;
For only then my lady shall want ice
At heart, and on her brow th' accustom'd cloud,
When dry shall be the seas, the lakes, and streams.

While to the sea descend the mountain streams,
As long as wild beasts love umbrageous vales,
O'er those bright eyes shall hang th' unfriendly cloud
My own that moistens with continual rain;
And in that lovely breast be harden'd ice
Which forces still from mine so dolorous winds.

Yet well ought I to pardon all the winds
But for the love of one, that 'mid two streams
Shut me among bright verdure and pure ice;
So that I pictured then in thousand vales
The shade wherein I was, which heat or rain
Esteemeth not, nor sound of broken cloud.

But fled not ever cloud before the winds,
As I that day: nor ever streams with rain;
Nor ice, when April's sun opens the vales. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LI.

Del mar Tirreno alla sinistra riva.

THE FALL.

UPON the left shore of the Tyrrhene sea,
Where, broken by the winds, the waves complain,
Sudden I saw that honour'd green again,
Written for whom so many a page must be:
Love, ever in my soul his flame who fed,
Drew me with memories of those tresses fair;
Whence, in a rivulet, which silent there
Through long grass stole, I fell, as one struck dead.
Lone as I was, 'mid hills of oak and fir,
I felt ashamed; to heart of gentle mould
Blushes suffice: nor needs it other spur.

'Tis well at least, breaking bad customs old,
To change from eyes to feet: from these so wet
By those if milder April should be met. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LII.

L' aspetto sacro della terra vostra.

THE VIEW OF ROME PROMPTS HIM TO TEAR HIMSELF FROM LAURA, BUT LOVE WILL NOT ALLOW HIM.

THE solemn aspect of this sacred shore
Wakes for the misspent past my bitter sighs;
'Pause, wretched man! and turn,' as conscience cries,
Pointing the heavenward way where I should soar.
But soon another thought gets mastery o'er
The first, that so to palter were unwise;
E'en now the time, if memory err not, flies,
When we should wait our lady-love before.
I, for his aim then well I apprehend,
Within me freeze, as one who, sudden, hears
News unexpected which his soul offend.
Returns my first thought then, that disappears;
Nor know I which shall conquer, but till now
Within me they contend, nor hope of rest allow!
MACGREGOR.

SONNET LIII.

Ben sapev' io che natural consiglio.

FLEEING FROM LOVE, HE FALLS INTO THE HANDS OF HIS MINISTERS.

FULL well I know that natural wisdom nought,
Love, 'gainst thy power, in any age prevail'd,
For snares oft set, fond oaths that ever fail'd,
Sore proofs of thy sharp talons long had taught;
But lately, and in me it wonder wrought—
With care this new experience be detail'd—
'Tween Tuscany and Elba as I sail'd
On the salt sea, it first my notice caught.
I fled from thy broad hands, and, by the way,
An unknown wanderer, 'neath the violence
Of winds, and waves, and skies, I helpless lay,
When, lo! thy ministers, I knew not whence,
Who quickly made me by fresh stings to feel
Ill who resists his fate, or would conceal. MACGREGOR.

Drawn by S. Prout.

CASTLE OF ST ANGELO & ST PETERS.

CANZONE VII.

Lasso me, ch' i' non so in qual parte pieghi.

HE WOULD CONSOLE HIMSELF WITH SONG, BUT IS CONSTRAINED TO WEEP.

Me wretched! for I know not whither tend
The hopes which have so long my heart betray'd:
If none there be who will compassion lend,
Wherefore to Heaven these often prayers for aid?
But if, belike, not yet denied to me
That, ere my own life end,
These sad notes mute shall be,
Let not my Lord conceive the wish too free,
Yet once, amid sweet flowers, to touch the string,
"Reason and right it is that love I sing."

Reason indeed there were at last that I
Should sing, since I have sigh'd so long and late,
But that for me 'tis vain such art to try,
Brief pleasures balancing with sorrows great;
Could I, by some sweet verse, but cause to shine
Glad wonder and new joy
Within those eyes divine,
Bliss o'er all other lovers then were mine!
But more, if frankly fondly I could say,
"My lady asks, I therefore wake the lay."

Delicious, dangerous thoughts! that, to begin
A theme so high, have gently led me thus,
You know I ne'er can hope to pass within
Our lady's heart, so strongly steel'd from us;
She will not deign to look on thing so low,
Nor may our language win
Aught of her care: since Heaven ordains it so,
And vainly to oppose must irksome grow,
Even as I my heart to stone would turn,
"So in my verse would I be rude and stern."

What do I say? where am I?—My own heart
And its misplaced desires alone deceive!
Though my view travel utmost heaven athwart
No planet there condemns me thus to grieve:
Why, if the body's veil obscure my sight,
Blame to the stars impart,

Or other things as bright?
Within me reigns my tyrant, day and night,
Since, for his triumph, me a captive took
"Her lovely face, and lustrous eyes' dear look."

While all things else in Nature's boundless reign
Came good from the Eternal Master's mould,
I look for such desert in me in vain:
Me the light wounds that I around behold;
To the true splendour if I turn at last,
My eye would shrink in pain,
Whose own fault o'er it cast
Such film, and not the fatal day long past,
When first her angel beauty met my view,
"In the sweet season when my life was new."

MACGREGOR.

CANZONE VIII.

Perchè la vita è breve.

IN PRAISE OF LAURA'S EYES: THE DIFFICULTY OF HIS THEME.

SINCE human life is frail,
And genius trembles at the lofty theme,
I little confidence in either place;
But let my tender wail
There, where it ought, deserved attention claim,
That wail which e'en in silence we may trace.
O beauteous eyes, where Love doth nestling stay!
To you I turn my insufficient lay,
Unapt to flow; but passion's goad I feel:
And he of you who sings
Such courteous habit by the strain is taught,
That, borne on amorous wings,
He soars above the reach of vulgar thought:
Exalted thus, I venture to reveal
What long my cautious heart has labour'd to conceal.

Yes, well do I perceive
To you how wrongful is my scanty praise;
Yet the strong impulse cannot be withstood,
That urges, since I view'd
What fancy to the sight before ne'er gave,
What ne'er before graced mine, or higher lays.

Bright authors of my sadly-pleasing state,
That you alone conceive me well I know,
When to your fierce beams I become as snow!
Your elegant disdain
Haply then kindles at my worthless strain.
Did not this dread create
Some mitigation of my bosom's heat,
Death would be bliss: for greater joy 'twould give
With them to suffer death, without them than to live.

If not consumèd quite,
I the weak object of a flame so strong:
'Tis not that safety springs from native might,
But that some fear restrains,
Which chills the current circling through my veins;
Strengthening this heart, that it may suffer long.
O hills, O vales, O forests, floods, and fields,
Ye who have witness'd how my sad life flows,
Oft have ye heard me call on death for aid.
Ah, state surcharged with woes!
To stay destroys, and flight no succour yields.
But had not higher dread
Withheld, some sudden effort I had made
To end my sorrows and protracted pains,
Of which the beauteous cause insensible remains.

Why lead me, grief, astray
From my first theme to chant a different lay?
Let me proceed where pleasure may invite.
'Tis not of you I 'plain,
O eyes, beyond compare serenely bright;
Nor yet of him who binds me in his chain.
Ye clearly can behold the hues that Love
Scatters ofttime on my dejected face;
And fancy may his inward workings trace
There where, whole nights and days,
He rules with power derived from your bright rays:
What rapture would ye prove,
If you, dear lights, upon yourselves could gaze!
But, frequent as you bend your beams on me,
What influence you possess you in another see.

Oh! if to you were known
That beauty which I sing, immense, divine,
As unto him on whom its glories shine!
The heart had then o'erflown
With joy unbounded, such as is denied
Unto that nature which its acts doth guide.
How happy is the soul for you that sighs,
Celestial lights! which lend a charm to life,
And make me bless what else I should not prize!
Ah! why, so seldom why
Afford what ne'er can cause satiety?
More often to your sight
Why not bring Love, who holds me constant strife?
And why so soon of joys despoil me quite,
Which ever and anon my trancèd soul delight?

Yes, 'debted to your grace,
Frequent I feel throughout my inmost soul
Unwonted floods of sweetest rapture roll;
Relieving so the mind,
That all oppressive thoughts are left behind,
And of a thousand only one has place;
For which alone this life is dear to me.
Oh! might the blessing of duration prove,
Not equall'd then could my condition be!
But this would, haply, move
In others envy, in myself vain pride.
That pain should be allied
To pleasure is, alas! decreed above;
Then, stifling all the ardour of desire,
Homeward I turn my thoughts, and in myself retire.

So sweetly shines reveal'd
The amorous thought within your soul which dwells,
That other joys it from my heart expels:
Hence I aspire to frame
Lays whereon Hope may build a deathless name,
When in the tomb my dust shall lie conceal'd.
At your approach anguish and sorrow fly;
These, as your beams retire, again draw nigh:
Yet outward acts their influence ne'er betray,

For doting memory
Dwells on the past, and chases them away.
Whatever, then, of worth
My genius ripens owes to you its birth.
To you all honour and all praise is due—
Myself a barren soil, and cultured but by you.

Thy strains, O song! appease me not, but fire,
Chanting a theme that wings my wild desire:
Trust me, thou shalt ere long a sister-song acquire. NOTT.

SINCE mortal life is frail,
And my mind shrinks from lofty themes deterr'd,
But small the trust which I in either feel:
Yet hope I that my wail,
Which vainly I in silence would conceal,
Shall, where I wish, where most it ought, be heard.
Beautiful eyes! wherein Love makes his nest,
To you my song its feeble descant turns,
Slow of itself, but now by passion spurr'd;
Who sings of you is blest,
And from his theme such courteous habit learns
That, borne on wings of love,
Proudly he soars each viler thought above;
Encouraged thus, what long my harass'd heart
Has kept conceal'd, I venture to impart.

Yet do I know full well
How much my praise must wrongful prove to you,
But how the great desire can I oppose,
Which ever in me grows,
Since what surpasses thought 'twas mine to view,
Though that nor others' wit nor mine can tell?
Eyes! guilty authors of my cherish'd pain,
That you alone can judge me, well I know,
When from your burning beams I melt like snow,
Haply your sweet disdain
Offence in my unworthiness may see;
Ah! were there not such fear,
To calm the heat with which I kindle near,
'Twere bliss to die: for better far to me
Were death with them than life without could be.

If yet not wasted quite—
So frail a thing before so fierce a flame—
'Tis not from my own strength that safety came,
But that some fear gives might,
Freezing the warm blood coursing through its veins,
To my poor heart better to bear the strife.
O valleys, hills, O forests, floods, and plains,
Witnesses of my melancholy life!
For death how often have ye heard me pray!
Ah, miserable fate!
Where flight avails not, though 'tis death to stay;
But, if a dread more great
Restrain'd me not, despair would find a way,
Speedy and short, my lingering pains to close,
—Hers then the crime who still no mercy shows.

Why thus astray, O grief,
Lead me to speak what I would leave unsaid?
Leave me, where pleasure me impels, to tread:
Not now my song complains
Of you, sweet eyes, serene beyond belief,
Nor yet of him who binds me in such chains:
Right well may you observe the varying hues
Which o'er my visage oft the tyrant strews,
And thence may guess what war within he makes,
Where night and day he reigns,
Strong in the power which from your light he takes:
Blessèd ye were as bright,
Save that from you is barr'd your own dear sight:
Yet often as to me those orbs you turn,
What they to others are you well may learn.

If, as to us who gaze,
Were known to you the charms incredible
And heavenly, of which I sing the praise,
No measured joy would swell
Your heart, and haply, therefore, 'tis denied
Unto the power which doth their motions guide.
Happy the soul for you which breathes the sigh,
Best lights of heaven! for whom I grateful bless
This life, which has for me no other joy.
Alas! so seldom why
Give me what I can ne'er too much possess?

Why not more often see
The ceaseless havoc which love makes of me?
And why that bliss so quickly from me steal,
From time to time which my rapt senses feel?

Yes, thanks, great thanks to you!
From time to time I feel through all my soul
A sweetness so unusual and new,
That every marring care
And gloomy vision thence begins to roll,
So that, from all, one only thought is there.
That—that alone consoles me life to bear:
And could but this my joy endure awhile,
Nought earthly could, methinks, then match my state.
Yet such great honour might
Envy in others, pride in me excite:
Thus still it seems the fate
Of man, that tears should chase his transient smile:
And, checking thus my burning wishes, I
Back to myself return, to muse and sigh.

The amorous anxious thought,
Which reigns within you, flashes so on me,
That from my heart it draws all other joy;
Whence works and words so wrought
Find scope and issue, that I hope to be
Immortal made, although all flesh must die.
At your approach ennui and anguish fly;
With your departure they return again:
But memory, on the past which doting dwells,
Denies them entrance then,
So that no outward act their influence tells;
Thus, if in me is nurst
Any good fruit, from you the seed came first:
To you, if such appear, the praise is due,
Barren myself till fertilized by you.

Thy strains appease me not, O song!
But rather fire me still that theme to sing
Where centre all my thoughts—therefore, ere long,
A sister ode to join thee will I bring. MACGREGOR.

CANZONE IX.

Gentil mia donna, i' veggio.

IN PRAISE OF LAURA'S EYES: THEY LEAD HIM TO CONTEMPLATE THE PATH OF LIFE.

LADY, in your bright eyes
Soft glancing round, I mark a holy light,
Pointing the arduous way that heavenward lies;
And to my practised sight,
From thence, where Love enthroned, asserts his might,
Visibly, palpably, the soul beams forth.
This is the beacon guides to deeds of worth,
And urges me to seek the glorious goal;
This bids me leave behind the vulgar throng,
Nor can the human tongue
Tell how those orbs divine o'er all my soul
Exert their sweet control,
Both when hoar winter's frosts around are flung,
And when the year puts on his youth again,
Jocund, as when this bosom first knew pain.

Oh! if in that high sphere,
From whence the Eternal Ruler of the stars
In this excelling work declared his might,
All be as fair and bright,
Loose me from forth my darksome prison here,
That to so glorious life the passage bars;
Then, in the wonted tumult of my breast,
I hail boon Nature, and the genial day
That gave me being, and a fate so blest,
And her who bade hope beam
Upon my soul; for till then burthensome
Was life itself become:
But now, elate with touch of self-esteem,
High thoughts and sweet within that heart arise,
Of which the warders are those beauteous eyes.

No joy so exquisite
Did Love or fickle Fortune ere devise,
In partial mood, for favour'd votaries,
But I would barter it
For one dear glance of those angelic eyes,
Whence springs my peace as from its living root.
O vivid lustre! of power absolute

O'er all my being—source of that delight,
By which consumed I sink, a willing prey.
As fades each lesser ray
Before your splendour more intense and bright,
So to my raptured heart,
When your surpassing sweetness you impart,
No other thought of feeling may remain
Where you, with Love himself, despotic reign.

All sweet emotions e'er
By happy lovers felt in every clime,
Together all, may not with mine compare,
When, as from time to time,
I catch from that dark radiance rich and deep
A ray in which, disporting, Love is seen;
And I believe that from my cradled sleep,
By Heaven provided this resource hath been,
'Gainst adverse fortune, and my nature frail.
Wrong'd am I by that veil,
And the fair hand which oft the light eclipse,
That all my bliss hath wrought;
And whence the passion struggling on my lips,
Both day and night, to vent the breast o'erfraught,
Still varying as I read her varying thought.

For that (with pain I find)
Not Nature's poor endowments may alone
Render me worthy of a look so kind,
I strive to raise my mind
To match with the exalted hopes I own,
And fires, though all engrossing, pure as mine.
If prone to good, averse to all things base,
Contemner of what worldlings covet most,
I may become by long self-discipline.
Haply this humble boast
May win me in her fair esteem a place;
For sure the end and aim
Of all my tears, my sorrowing heart's sole claim,
Were the soft trembling of relenting eyes,
The generous lover's last, best, dearest prize.

My lay, thy sister-song is gone before,
And now another in my teeming brain
Prepares itself: whence I resume the strain. DACRE.

CANZONE X.

Poichè per mio destino.

IN PRAISE OF LAURA'S EYES: IN THEM HE FINDS EVERY GOOD, AND HE CAN NEVER CEASE TO PRAISE THEM.

SINCE then by destiny
I am compell'd to sing the strong desire,
Which here condemns me ceaselessly to sigh,
May Love, whose quenchless fire
Excites me, be my guide and point the way,
And in the sweet task modulate my lay:
But gently be it, lest th' o'erpowering theme
Inflame and sting me, lest my fond heart may
Dissolve in too much softness, which I deem,
From its sad state, may be:
For in me—hence my terror and distress!
Not now as erst I see
Judgment to keep my mind's great passion less:
Nay, rather from mine own thoughts melt I so,
As melts before the summer sun the snow.

At first I fondly thought
Communing with mine ardent flame to win
Some brief repose, some time of truce within:
This was the hope which brought
Me courage what I suffer'd to explain,
Now, now it leaves me martyr to my pain:
But still, continuing mine amorous song,
Must I the lofty enterprise maintain;
So powerful is the wish that in me glows,
That Reason, which so long
Restrain'd it, now no longer can oppose.
Then teach me, Love, to sing
In such frank guise, that ever if the ear
Of my sweet foe should chance the notes to hear,
Pity, I ask no more, may in her spring.

If, as in other times,
When kindled to true virtue was mankind,
The genius, energy of man could find
Entrance in divers climes,
Mountains and seas o'erpassing, seeking there
Honour, and culling oft its garland fair,

Mine were such wish, not mine such need would be,
From shore to shore my weary course to trace,
Since God, and Love, and Nature deign for me
Each virtue and each grace
In those dear eyes where I rejoice to place.
In life to them must I
Turn as to founts whence peace and safety swell:
And e'en were death, which else I fear not, nigh,
Their sight alone would teach me to be well.

As, vex'd by the fierce wind,
The weary sailor lifts at night his gaze
To the twin lights which still our pole displays,
So, in the storms unkind
Of Love which I sustain, in those bright eyes
My guiding light and only solace lies:
But e'en in this far more is due to theft,
Which, taught by Love, from time to time, I make
Of secret glances than their gracious gift:
Yet that, though rare and slight,
Makes me from them perpetual model take;
Since first they blest my sight
Nothing of good without them have I tried,
Placing them over me to guard and guide,
Because mine own worth held itself but light.

Never the full effect
Can I imagine, and describe it less
Which o'er my heart those soft eyes still possess!
As worthless I reject
And mean all other joys that life confers,
E'en as all other beauties yield to hers.
A tranquil peace, alloy'd by no distress,
Such as in heaven eternally abides,
Moves from their lovely and bewitching smile.
So could I gaze, the while
Love, at his sweet will, governs them and guides,
—E'en though the sun were nigh,
Resting above us on his onward wheel—
On her, intensely with undazzled eye,
Nor of myself nor others think or feel.

Ah! that I should desire
Things that can never in this world be won,

Living on wishes hopeless to acquire.
Yet, were the knot undone,
Wherewith my weak tongue Love is wont to bind,
Checking its speech, when her sweet face puts on
All its great charms, then would I courage find,
Words on that point so apt and new to use,
As should make weep whoe'er might hear the tale.
But the old wounds I bear,
Stamp'd on my tortured heart, such power refuse;
Then grow I weak and pale,
And my blood hides itself I know not where;
Nor as I was remain I: hence I know
Love dooms my death and this the fatal blow,

Farewell, my song! already do I see
Heavily in my hand the tired pen move
From its long dear discourse with her I love;
Not so my thoughts from communing with me. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LIV.

Io son già stanco di pensar siccome.

HE WONDERS AT HIS LONG ENDURANCE OF SUCH TOIL AND SUFFERING.

I WEARY me alway with questions keen
How, why my thoughts ne'er turn from you away,
Wherefore in life they still prefer to stay,
When they might flee this sad and painful scene,
And how of the fine hair, the lovely mien,
Of the bright eyes which all my feelings sway,
Calling on your dear name by night and day,
My tongue ne'er silent in their praise has been,
And how my feet not tender are, nor tired,
Pursuing still with many a useless pace
Of your fair footsteps the elastic trace;
And whence the ink, the paper whence acquired,
Fill'd with your memories: if in this I err,
Not art's defect but Love's own fault it were. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LV.

I begli occhi, ond' i' fui percosso in guisa.

HE IS NEVER WEARY OF PRAISING THE EYES OF LAURA.

THE bright eyes which so struck my fenceless side
That they alone which harm'd can heal the smart,

Beyond or power of herbs or magic art,
Or stone which oceans from our shores divide,
The chance of other love have so denied
That one sweet thought alone contents my heart,
From following which if ne'er my tongue depart,
Pity the guided though you blame the guide.
These are the bright eyes which, in every land
But most in its own shrine, my heart, adored,
Have spread the triumphs of my conquering lord;
These are the same bright eyes which ever stand
Burning within me, e'en as vestal fires,
In singing which my fancy never tires. MACGREGOR.

NOT all the spells of the magician's art,
Not potent herbs, nor travel o'er the main,
But those sweet eyes alone can soothe my pain,
And they which struck the blow must heal the smart;
Those eyes from meaner love have kept my heart,
Content one single image to retain,
And censure but the medium wild and vain,
If ill my words their honey'd sense impart;
These are those beauteous eyes which never fail
To prove Love's conquest, wheresoe'er they shine,
Although my breast hath oftenest felt their fire;
These are those beauteous eyes which still assail
And penetrate my soul with sparks divine,
So that of singing them I cannot tire. WROTTESLEY.

SONNET LVI.

Amor con sue promesse lusingando.

LOVE'S CHAINS ARE STILL DEAR TO HIM.

BY promise fair and artful flattery
Me Love contrived in prison old to snare,
And gave the keys to her my foe in care,
Who in self-exile dooms me still to lie.
Alas! his wiles I knew not until I
Was in their power, so sharp yet sweet to bear,
(Man scarce will credit it although I swear)
That I regain my freedom with a sigh,

And, as true suffering captives ever do,
Carry of my sore chains the greater part,
And on my brow and eyes so writ my heart
That when she witnesseth my cheek's wan hue
A sigh shall own: if right I read his face,
Between him and his tomb but small the space!

MACGREGOR.

SONNET LVII.

Per mirar Policleto a prova fiso.

ON THE PORTRAIT OF LAURA PAINTED BY SIMON MEMMI.

HAD Policletus seen her, or the rest
Who, in past time, won honour in this art,
A thousand years had but the meaner part
Shown of the beauty which o'ercame my breast.
But Simon sure, in Paradise the blest,
Whence came this noble lady of my heart,
Saw her, and took this wond'rous counterpart
Which should on earth her lovely face attest.
The work, indeed, was one, in heaven alone
To be conceived, not wrought by fellow-men,
Over whose souls the body's veil is thrown:
'Twas done of grace: and fail'd his pencil when
To earth he turn'd our cold and heat to bear,
And felt that his own eyes but mortal were. MACGREGOR.

HAD Polycletus in proud rivalry
On her his model gazed a thousand years,
Not half the beauty to my soul appears,
In fatal conquest, e'er could he descry.
But, Simon, thou wast then in heaven's blest sky,
Ere she, my fair one, left her native spheres,
To trace a loveliness this world reveres
Was thus thy task, from heaven's reality.
Yes—thine the portrait heaven alone could wake,
This clime, nor earth, such beauty could conceive,
Where droops the spirit 'neath its earthly shrine:
The soul's reflected grace was thine to take,
Which not on earth thy painting could achieve,
Where mortal limits all the powers confine. WOLLASTON.

SONNET LVIII.

Quando giunse a Simon l' alto concetto.

HE DESIRES ONLY THAT MEMMI HAD BEEN ABLE TO IMPART SPEECH TO HIS PORTRAIT OF LAURA.

WHEN, at my word, the high thought fired his mind,
Within that master-hand which placed the pen,
Had but the painter, in his fair work, then
Language and intellect to beauty join'd,
Less 'neath its care my spirit since had pined,
Which worthless held what still pleased other men;
And yet so mild she seems that my fond ken
Of peace sees promise in that aspect kind.
When further communing I hold with her
Benignantly she smiles, as if she heard
And well could answer to mine every word:
But far o'er mine thy pride and pleasure were,
Bright, warm and young, Pygmalion, to have press'd
Thine image long and oft, while mine not once has blest.

MACGREGOR.

WHEN Simon at my wish the proud design
Conceived, which in his hand the pencil placed,
Had he, while loveliness his picture graced,
But added speech and mind to charms divine;
What sighs he then had spared this breast of mine:
That bliss had given to higher bliss distaste:
For, when such meekness in her look was traced,
'Twould seem she soon to kindness might incline.
But, urging converse with the portray'd fair,
Methinks she deigns attention to my prayer,
Though wanting to reply the power of voice.
What praise thyself, Pygmalion, hast thou gain'd;
Forming that image, whence thou hast obtain'd
A thousand times what, once obtain'd, would me rejoice.

NOTT.

SONNET LIX.

Se al principio risponde il fine e 'l mezzo.

IF HIS PASSION STILL INCREASE, HE MUST SOON DIE.

IF, of this fourteenth year wherein I sigh,
The end and middle with its opening vie,

Nor air nor shade can give me now release,
I feel mine ardent passion so increase:
For Love, with whom my thought no medium knows,
Beneath whose yoke I never find repose,
So rules me through these eyes, on mine own ill
Too often turn'd, but half remains to kill.
Thus, day by day, I feel me sink apace,
And yet so secretly none else may trace,
Save she whose glances my fond bosom tear.
Scarcely till now this load of life I bear:
Nor know how long with me will be her stay,
For death draws near, and hastens life away. MACGREGOR.

SESTINA IV.

Chi è fermato di menar sua vita.

HE PRAYS GOD TO GUIDE HIS FRAIL BARK TO A SAFE PORT.

WHO is resolved to venture his vain life
On the deceitful wave and 'mid the rocks,
Alone, unfearing death, in little bark,
Can never be far distant from his end:
Therefore betimes he should return to port
While to the helm yet answers his true sail.

The gentle breezes to which helm and sail
I trusted, entering on this amorous life,
And hoping soon to make some better port,
Have led me since amid a thousand rocks,
And the sure causes of my mournful end
Are not alone without, but in my bark.

Long cabin'd and confined in this blind bark,
I wander'd, looking never at the sail,
Which, prematurely, bore me to my end;
Till He was pleased who brought me into life
So far to call me back from those sharp rocks,
That, distantly, at last was seen my port.

As lights at midnight seen in any port,
Sometimes from the main sea by passing bark,
Save when their ray is lost 'mid storms or rocks;
So I too from above the swollen sail
Saw the sure colours of that other life,
And could not help but sigh to reach my end.

Not that I yet am certain of that end,
For wishing with the dawn to be in port,
Is a long voyage for so short a life:
And then I fear to find me in frail bark,
Beyond my wishes full its every sail
With the strong wind which drove me on those rocks.'

Escape I living from these doubtful rocks,
Or if my exile have but a fair end,
How happy shall I be to furl my sail,
And my last anchor cast in some sure port;
But, ah! I burn, and, as some blazing bark,
So hard to me to leave my wonted life.

Lord of my end and master of my life,
Before I lose my bark amid the rocks,
Direct to a good port its harass'd sail! MACGREGOR.

SONNET LX.

Io son sì stanco sotto 'l fascio antico.

HE CONFESSES HIS ERRORS, AND THROWS HIMSELF ON THE MERCY OF GOD.

EVIL by custom, as by nature frail,
I am so wearied with the long disgrace,
That much I dread my fainting in the race
Should let th' original enemy prevail.
Once an Eternal Friend, that heard my cries,
Came to my rescue, glorious in his might,
Arm'd with all-conquering love, then took his flight,
That I in vain pursued Him with my eyes.
But his dear words, yet sounding, sweetly say,
"O ye that faint with travel, see the way!
Hopeless of other refuge, come to me."
What grace, what kindness, or what destiny
Will give me wings, as the fair-feather'd dove,
To raise me hence and seek my rest above?

BASIL KENNET.

So weary am I 'neath the constant thrall
Of mine own vile heart, and the false world's taint,
That much I fear while on the way to faint,
And in the hands of my worst foe to fall.
Well came, ineffably, supremely kind,
A friend to free me from the guilty bond,

But too soon upward flew my sight beyond,
So that in vain I strive his track to find;
But still his words stamp'd on my heart remain,
All ye who labour, lo! the way in *me*;
Come unto me, nor let the world detain!
Oh! that to me, by grace divine, were given
Wings like a dove, then I away would flee,
And be at rest, up, up from earth to heaven! MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXI.

Io non fu' d' amar voi lassato unquanco.

UNLESS LAURA RELENT, HE IS RESOLVED TO ABANDON HER.

YET was I never of your love aggrieved,
Nor never shall while that my life doth last:
But of hating myself, that date is past;
And tears continual sore have me wearied:
I will not yet in my grave be buried;
Nor on my tomb your name have fixèd fast,
As cruel cause, that did the spirit soon haste
From the unhappy bones, by great sighs stirr'd.
Then if a heart of amorous faith and will
Content your mind withouten doing grief;
Please it you so to this to do relief:
If otherwise you seek for to fulfil
Your wrath, you err, and shall not as you ween;
And you yourself the cause thereof have been. WYATT.

WEARY I never was, nor can be e'er,
Lady, while life shall last, of loving you,
But brought, alas! myself in hate to view,
Perpetual tears have bred a blank despair:
I wish a tomb, whose marble fine and fair,
When this tired spirit and frail flesh are two,
May show your name, to which my death is due,
If e'en our names at last one stone may share;
Wherefore, if full of faith and love, a heart
Can, of worst torture short, suffice your hate,
Mercy at length may visit e'en my smart.
If otherwise your wrath itself would sate,
It is deceived: and none will credit show;
To Love and to myself my thanks for this I owe.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXII.

Se bianche non son prima ambe le tempie.

THOUGH NOT SECURE AGAINST THE WILES OF LOVE, HE FEELS STRENGTH ENOUGH TO RESIST THEM.

TILL silver'd o'er by age my temples grow,
Where Time by slow degrees now plants his grey,
Safe shall I never be, in danger's way
While Love still points and plies his fatal bow.
I fear no more his tortures and his tricks,
That he will keep me further to ensnare
Nor ope my heart, that, from without, he there
His poisonous and ruthless shafts may fix.
No tears can now find issue from mine eyes,
But the way there so well they know to win,
That nothing now the pass to them denies.
Though the fierce ray rekindle me within,
It burns not all: her cruel and severe
Form may disturb, not break my slumbers here.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXIII.

Occhi, piangete; accompagnate il core.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE POET AND HIS EYES.

PLAYNE ye, myne eyes, accompanye my harte,
For, by your fault, lo, here is death at hand!
Ye brought hym first into this bitter band,
And of his harme as yett ye felt no part;
But now ye shall: Lo! here beginnes your smart.
Wett shall you be, ye shall it not withstand
With weepinge teares that shall make dymm your sight,
And mystic clowdes shall hang still in your light.
Blame but yourselves that kyndlyd have this brand,
With suche desyre to strayne that past your might;
But, since by you the hart hath caught his harme
His flamèd heat shall sometyme make you warme.

HARRINGTON.

P. WEEP, wretched eyes, accompany the heart
Which only from your weakness death sustains.
E. Weep? evermore we weep; with keener pains
For others' error than our own we smart.

P. Love, entering first through you an easy part,
Took up his seat, where now supreme he reigns.
E. We oped to him the way, but Hope the veins
First fired of him now stricken by death's dart.
P. The lots, as seems to you, scarce equal fall
'Tween heart and eyes, for you, at first sight, were
Enamour'd of your common ill and shame.
E. This is the thought which grieves us most of all;
For perfect judgments are on earth so rare
That one man's fault is oft another's blame.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXIV.

Io amai sempre, ed amo forte ancora.

HE LOVES, AND WILL ALWAYS LOVE, THE SPOT AND THE HOUR IN WHICH HE FIRST BECAME ENAMOURED OF LAURA.

I ALWAYS loved, I love sincerely yet,
And to love more from day to day shall learn,
The charming spot where oft in grief I turn
When Love's severities my bosom fret:
My mind to love the time and hour is set
Which taught it each low care aside to spurn;
She too, of loveliest face, for whom I burn
Bids me her fair life love and sin forget.
Who ever thought to see in friendship join'd,
On all sides with my suffering heart to cope,
The gentle enemies I love so well?
Love now is paramount my heart to bind,
And, save that with desire increases hope,
Dead should I lie alive where I would dwell. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXV.

Io avrò sempre in odio la fenestra.

BETTER IS IT TO DIE HAPPY THAN TO LIVE IN PAIN.

ALWAYS in hate the window shall I bear,
Whence Love has shot on me his shafts at will,
Because not one of them sufficed to kill:
For death is good when life is bright and fair;
But in this earthly jail its term to outwear
Is cause to me, alas! of infinite ill;

And mine is worse because immortal still,
Since from the heart the spirit may not tear.
Wretched! ere this who surely ought'st to know
By long experience, from his onward course
None can stay Time by flattery or by force.
Oft and again have I address'd it so:
Mourner, away! he parteth not too soon
Who leaves behind him far his life's calm June.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXVI.

Si tosto come avvien che l' arco scocchi.

HE CALLS THE EYES OF LAURA FOES, BECAUSE THEY KEEP HIM IN LIFE ONLY TO TORMENT HIM.

INSTANTLY a good archer draws his bow
Small skill it needs, e'en from afar, to see
Which shaft, less fortunate, despised may be,
Which to its destined sign will certain go:
Lady, e'en thus of your bright eyes the blow,
You surely felt pass straight and deep in me,
Searching my life, whence—such is fate's decree—
Eternal tears my stricken heart overflow;
And well I know e'en then your pity said:
Fond wretch! to misery whom passion leads,
Be this the point at once to strike him dead.
But seeing now how sorrow sorrow breeds,
All that my cruel foes against me plot,
For my worse pain, and for my death is not. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXVII.

Poi che mia speme è lunga a venir troppo.

HE COUNSELS LOVERS TO FLEE, RATHER THAN BE CONSUMED BY THE FLAMES OF LOVE.

SINCE my hope's fruit yet faileth to arrive,
And short the space vouchsafed me to survive,
Betimes of this aware I fain would be,
Swifter than light or wind from Love to flee:
And I do flee him, weak albeit and lame
O' my left side, where passion racked my frame.
Though now secure yet bear I on my face
Of the amorous encounter signal trace.

Wherefore I counsel each this way who comes,
Turn hence your footsteps, and, if Love consumes,
Think not in present pain his worst is done;
For, though I live, of thousand scapes not one!
'Gainst Love my enemy was strong indeed—
Lo! from his wounds e'en she is doom'd to bleed.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXVIII.

Fuggendo la prigione ov' Amor m' ebbe.

HE LONGS TO RETURN TO THE CAPTIVITY OF LOVE.

FLEEING the prison which had long detain'd,
Where Love dealt with me as to him seem'd well,
Ladies, the time were long indeed to tell,
How much my heart its new-found freedom pain'd.
I felt within I could not, so bereaved,
Live e'en a day: and, midway, on my eyes
That traitor rose in so complete disguise,
A wiser than myself had been deceived:
Whence oft I've said, deep sighing for the past,
Alas! the yoke and chains of old to me
Were sweeter far than thus released to be.
Me wretched! but to learn mine ill at last;
With what sore trial must I now forget
Errors that round my path myself have set. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXIX.

Erano i capei d' oro all' aura sparsi.

HE PAINTS THE BEAUTIES OF LAURA, PROTESTING HIS UNALTERABLE LOVE.

LOOSE to the breeze her golden tresses flow'd
Wildly in thousand mazy ringlets blown,
And from her eyes unconquer'd glances shone,
Those glances now so sparingly bestow'd.
And true or false, meseem'd some signs she show'd
As o'er her cheek soft pity's hue was thrown;
I, whose whole breast with love's soft food was sown,
What wonder if at once my bosom glow'd?
Graceful she moved, with more than mortal mien,
In form an angel: and her accents won
Upon the ear with more than human sound.
A spirit heavenly pure, a living sun,

Was what I saw; and if no more 'twere seen,
T' unbend the bow will never heal the wound.

ANON. OX. 1795.

HER golden tresses on the wind she threw,
Which twisted them in many a beauteous braid;
In her fine eyes the burning glances play'd,
With lovely light, which now they seldom show:
Ah! then it seem'd her face wore pity's hue,
Yet haply fancy my fond sense betray'd;
Nor strange that I, in whose warm heart was laid
Love's fuel, suddenly enkindled grew!
Not like a mortal's did her step appear,
Angelic was her form; her voice, methought,
Pour'd more than human accents on the ear.
A living sun was what my vision caught,
A spirit pure; and though not such still found,
Unbending of the bow ne'er heals the wound. NOTT.

HER golden tresses to the gale were streaming,
That in a thousand knots did them entwine,
And the sweet rays which now so rarely shine
From her enchanting eyes, were brightly beaming,
And—was it fancy?—o'er that dear face gleaming
Methought I saw Compassion's tint divine;
What marvel that this ardent heart of mine
Blazed swiftly forth, impatient of Love's dreaming?
There was nought mortal in her stately tread
But grace angelic, and her speech awoke
Than human voices a far loftier sound,
A spirit of heaven,—a living sun she broke
Upon my sight;—what if these charms be fled?—
The slackening of the bow heals not the wound.

WROTTESLEY.

SONNET LXX.

La bella donna che cotanto amavi.

TO HIS BROTHER GERARDO, ON THE DEATH OF A LADY TO WHOM HE WAS ATTACHED.

THE beauteous lady thou didst love so well
Too soon hath from our regions wing'd her flight,
To find, I ween, a home 'mid realms of light;
So much in virtue did she here excel.

Thy heart's twin key of joy and woe can dwell
No more with her—then re-assume thy might,
Pursue her by the path most swift and right,
Nor let aught earthly stay thee by its spell.
Thus from thy heaviest burthen being freed,
Each other thou canst easier dispel,
And an unfreighted pilgrim seek thy sky;
Too well, thou seest, how much the soul hath need,
(Ere yet it tempt the shadowy vale) to quell
Each earthly hope, since all that lives must die.

WOLLASTON.

THE lovely lady who was long so dear
To thee, now suddenly is from us gone,
And, for this hope is sure, to heaven is flown,
So mild and angel-like her life was here!
Now from her thraldom since thy heart is clear,
Whose either key she, living, held alone,
Follow where she the safe short way has shown,
Nor let aught earthly longer interfere.
Thus disencumber'd from the heavier weight,
The lesser may aside be easier laid,
And the freed pilgrim win the crystal gate;
So teaching us, since all things that are made
Hasten to death, how light must be his soul
Who treads the perilous pass, unscathed and whole!

MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXI.

Piangete, donne, e con voi pianga Amore.

ON THE DEATH OF CINO DA PISTOIA.

WEEP, beauteous damsels, and let Cupid weep,
Of every region weep, ye lover train;
He, who so skilfully attuned his strain
To your fond cause, is sunk in death's cold sleep!
Such limits let not my affliction keep,
As may the solace of soft tears restrain;
And, to relieve my bosom of its pain,
Be all my sighs tumultuous, utter'd deep!
Let song itself, and votaries of verse,
Breathe mournful accents o'er our Cino's bier,

Who late is gone to number with the blest!
Oh! weep, Pistoia, weep your sons perverse;
Its choicest habitant has fled our sphere,
And heaven may glory in its welcome guest! NOTT.

YE damsels, pour your tears! weep with you, Love!
Weep, all ye lovers, through the peopled sphere!
Since he is dead who, while he linger'd here,
With all his might to do you honour strove.
For me, this tyrant grief my prayers shall move
Not to contest the comfort of a tear,
Nor check those sighs, that to my heart are dear,
Since ease from them alone it hopes to prove.
Ye verses, weep!—ye rhymes, your woes renew!
For Cino, master of the love-fraught lay,
E'en now is from our fond embraces torn!
Pistoia, weep, and all your thankless crew!
Your sweetest inmate now is reft away—
But, heaven, rejoice, and hail your son new-born!
CHARLEMONT.

SONNET LXXII.

Più volte Amor m' avea già detto: scrivi.

HE WRITES WHAT LOVE BIDS HIM.

WRITE—to my heart Love oftentimes had said—
Write what thou seest in letters large of gold,
That livid are my votaries to behold,
And in a moment made alive and dead.
Once in thy heart my sovran influence spread
A public precedent to lovers told;
Though other duties drew thee from my fold,
I soon reclaim'd thee as thy footsteps fled.
And if the bright eyes which I show'd thee first,
If the fair face where most I loved to stay,
Thy young heart's icy hardness when I burst,
Restore to me the bow which all obey,
Then may thy cheek, which now so smooth appears,
Be channell'd with my daily drink of tears. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXIII.

Quando giugne per gli occhi al cor profondo.

HE DESCRIBES THE STATE OF TWO LOVERS, AND RETURNS IN THOUGHT TO HIS OWN SUFFERINGS.

When reaches through the eyes the conscious heart
Its imaged fate, all other thoughts depart;
The powers which from the soul their functions take
A dead weight on the frame its limbs then make.
From the first miracle a second springs,
At times the banish'd faculty that brings,
So fleeing from itself, to some new seat,
Which feeds revenge and makes e'en exile sweet.
Thus in both faces the pale tints were rife,
Because the strength which gave the glow of life
On neither side was where it wont to dwell—
I on that day these things remember'd well,
Of that fond couple when each varying mien
Told me in like estate what long myself had been.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXIV.

Così potess' io ben chiuder in versi.

HE COMPLAINS THAT TO HIM ALONE IS FAITH HURTFUL.

Could I, in melting verse, my thoughts but throw,
As in my heart their living load I bear,
No soul so cruel in the world was e'er
That would not at the tale with pity glow.
But ye, blest eyes, which dealt me the sore blow,
'Gainst which nor helm nor shield avail'd to spare
Within, without, behold me poor and bare,
Though never in laments is breathed my woe.
But since on me your bright glance ever shines,
E'en as a sunbeam through transparent glass,
Suffice then the desire without the lines.
Faith Peter bless'd and Mary, but, alas!
It proves an enemy to me alone,
Whose spirit save by you to none is known. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXV.

Io son dell' aspettar omai sì vinto.

HAVING ONCE SURRENDERED HIMSELF, HE IS COMPELLED EVER TO ENDURE THE PANGS OF LOVE.

WEARY with expectation's endless round,
And overcome in this long war of sighs,
I hold desires in hate and hopes despise,
And every tie wherewith my breast is bound;
But the bright face which in my heart profound
Is stamp'd, and seen where'er I turn mine eyes,
Compels me where, against my will, arise
The same sharp pains that first my ruin crown'd.
Then was my error when the old way quite
Of liberty was bann'd and barr'd to me:
He follows ill who pleases but his sight:
To its own harm my soul ran wild and free,
Now doom'd at others' will to wait and wend;
Because that once it ventured to offend. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXVI.

Ahi bella libertà, come tu m' hai.

HE DEPLORES HIS LOST LIBERTY AND THE UNHAPPINESS OF HIS PRESENT STATE.

ALAS! fair Liberty, thus left by thee,
Well hast thou taught my discontented heart
To mourn the peace it felt, ere yet Love's dart
Dealt me the wound which heal'd can never be;
Mine eyes so charm'd with their own weakness grow
That my dull mind of reason spurns the chain;
All worldly occupation they disdain,
Ah! that I should myself have train'd them so.
Naught, save of her who is my death, mine ear
Consents to learn; and from my tongue there flows
No accent save the name to me so dear;
Love to no other chase my spirit spurs,
No other path my feet pursue; nor knows
My hand to write in other praise but hers. MACGREGOR.

ALAS, sweet Liberty! in speeding hence,
Too well didst thou reveal unto my heart

Its careless joy, ere Love ensheathed his dart,
Of whose dread wound I ne'er can lose the sense.
My eyes, enamour'd of their grief intense,
Did in that hour from Reason's bridle start,
Thus used to woe, they have no wish to part;
Each other mortal work is an offence.
No other theme will now my soul content
Than she who plants my death, with whose blest name
I make the air resound in echoes sweet:
Love spurs me to her as his only bent,
My hand can trace nought other but her fame,
No other spot attracts my willing feet. WOLLASTON.

SONNET LXXVII.

Orso, al vostro destrier si può ben porre.

HE SYMPATHISES WITH HIS FRIEND ORSO AT HIS INABILITY TO ATTEND A TOURNAMENT.

ORSO, a curb upon thy gallant horse
Well may we place to turn him from his course,
But who thy heart may bind against its will
Which honour courts and shuns dishonour still?
Sigh not! for nought its praise away can take,
Though Fate this journey hinder you to make.
For, as already voiced by general fame,
Now is it there, and none before it came.
Amid the camp, upon the day design'd,
Enough itself beneath those arms to find
Which youth, love, valour, and near blood concern,
Crying aloud: With noble fire I burn,
As my good lord unwillingly at home,
Who pines and languishes in vain to come. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXVIII.

Poi che voi ed io più volte abbiam provato.

TO A FRIEND, COUNSELLING HIM TO ABANDON EARTHLY PLEASURES.

STILL has it been our bitter lot to prove
How hope, or e'er it reach fruition, flies!
Up then to that high good, which never dies,
Lift we the heart—to heaven's pure bliss above.

On earth, as in a tempting mead, we rove,
Where coil'd 'mid flowers the traitor serpent lies;
And, if some casual glimpse delight our eyes,
'Tis but to grieve the soul enthrall'd by Love.
Oh! then, as thou wouldst wish ere life's last day
To taste the sweets of calm unbroken rest,
Tread firm the narrow, shun the beaten way—
Ah! to thy friend too well may be address'd:
"Thou show'st a path, thyself most apt to stray,
Which late thy truant feet, fond youth, have never press'd."

WRANGHAM.

FRIEND, as we both in confidence complain
To see our ill-placed hopes return in vain,
Let that chief good which must for ever please
Exalt our thought and fix our happiness.
This world as some gay flowery field is spread,
Which hides a serpent in its painted bed,
And most it wounds when most it charms our eyes,
At once the tempter and the paradise.
And would you, then, sweet peace of mind restore,
And in fair calm expect your parting hour,
Leave the mad train, and court the happy few.
Well may it be replied, "O friend, you show
Others the path, from which so often you
Have stray'd, and now stray farther than before."

BASIL KENNET.

SONNET LXXIX.

Quella fenestra, ove l' un sol si vede.

RECOLLECTIONS OF LOVE.

THAT window where my sun is often seen
Refulgent, and the world's at morning's hours;
And that, where Boreas blows, when winter lowers,
And the short days reveal a clouded scene;
That bench of stone where, with a pensive mien,
My Laura sits, forgetting beauty's powers;
Haunts where her shadow strikes the walls or flowers,
And her feet press the paths or herbage green:
The place where Love assail'd me with success;
And spring, the fatal time that, first observed,

Revives the keen remembrance every year;
With looks and words, that o'er me have preserved
A power no length of time can render less,
Call to my eyes the sadly-soothing tear. PENN.

THAT window where my sun is ever seen,
Dazzling and bright, and Nature's at the none;
And that where still, when Boreas rude has blown
In the short days, the air thrills cold and keen:
The stone where, at high noon, her seat has been,
Pensive and parleying with herself alone:
Haunts where her bright form has its shadow thrown,
Or trod her fairy foot the carpet green:
The cruel spot where first Love spoil'd my rest,
And the new season which, from year to year,
Opes, on this day, the old wound in my breast:
The seraph face, the sweet words, chaste and dear,
Which in my suffering heart are deep impress'd,
All melt my fond eyes to the frequent tear. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXX.

Lasso! ben so che dolorose prede.

THOUGH FOR FOURTEEN YEARS HE HAS STRUGGLED UNSUCCESSFULLY, HE STILL HOPES TO CONQUER HIS PASSION.

ALAS! well know I what sad havoc makes
Death of our kind, how Fate no mortal spares!
How soon the world whom once it loved forsakes,
How short the faith it to the friendless bears!
Much languishment, I see, small mercy wakes;
For the last day though now my heart prepares,
Love not a whit my cruel prison breaks,
And still my cheek grief's wonted tribute wears.
I mark the days, the moments, and the hours
Bear the full years along, nor find deceit,
Bow'd 'neath a greater force than magic spell.
For fourteen years have fought with varying powers
Desire and Reason: and the best shall beat;
If mortal spirits here can good foretell. MACGREGOR.

ALAS! I know death makes us all his prey,
Nor aught of mercy shows to destined man;
How swift the world completes its circling span,
And faithless Time soon speeds him on his way.

My heart repeats the blast of earth's last day,
Yet for its grief no recompense can scan,
Love holds me still beneath its cruel ban,
And still my eyes their usual tribute pay.
My watchful senses mark how on their wing
The circling years transport their fleeter kin,
And still I bow enslaved as by a spell:
For fourteen years did reason proudly fling
Defiance at my tameless will, to win
A triumph blest, if Man can good foretell. WOLLASTON.

SONNET LXXXI.

Cesare, poi che 'l traditor d'Egitto.

THE COUNTENANCE DOES NOT ALWAYS TRULY INDICATE THE HEART.

WHEN Egypt's traitor Pompey's honour'd head
To Cæsar sent; then, records so relate,
To shroud a gladness manifestly great,
Some feignèd tears the specious monarch shed:
And, when misfortune her dark mantle spread
O'er Hannibal, and his afflicted state,
He laugh'd 'midst those who wept their adverse fate,
That rank despite to wreak defeat had bred.
Thus doth the mind oft variously conceal
Its several passions by a different veil;
Now with a countenance that's sad, now gay:
So mirth and song if sometimes I employ,
'Tis but to hide those sorrows that annoy,
'Tis but to chase my amorous cares away. NOTT.

CÆSAR, when Egypt's cringing traitor brought
The gory gift of Pompey's honour'd head,
Check'd the full gladness of his instant thought,
And specious tears of well-feign'd pity shed:
And Hannibal, when adverse Fortune wrought
On his afflicted empire evils dread,
'Mid shamed and sorrowing friends, by laughter, sought
To ease the anger at his heart that fed.
Thus, as the mind its every feeling hides,
Beneath an aspect contrary, the mien,
Bright'ning with hope or charged with gloom, is seen.
Thus ever if I sing, or smile betides,

The outward joy serves only to conceal
The inner ail and anguish that I feel. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXXII.

Vinse Annibal, e non seppe usar poi.

TO STEFANO COLONNA, COUNSELLING HIM TO FOLLOW UP HIS VICTORY OVER THE ORSINI.

HANNIBAL conquer'd oft, but never knew
The fruits and gain of victory to get,
Wherefore, dear lord, be wise, take care that yet
A like misfortune happen not to you.
Still in their lair the cubs and she-bear,* who
Rough pasturage and sour in May have met,
With mad rage gnash their teeth and talons whet,
And vengeance of past loss on us pursue:
While this new grief disheartens and appalls,
Replace not in its sheath your honour'd sword,
But, boldly following where your fortune calls,
E'en to its goal be glory's path explored,
Which fame and honour to the world may give
That e'en for centuries after death will live. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXXIII.

L' aspettata virtù che 'n voi fioriva.

TO PANDOLFO MALATESTA, LORD OF RIMINI.

SWEET virtue's blossom had its promise shed
Within thy breast (when Love became thy foe);
Fair as the flower, now its fruit doth glow,
And not by visions hath my hope been fed.
To hail thee thus, I by my heart am led,
That by my pen thy name renown should know;
No marble can the lasting fame bestow
Like that by poets' characters is spread.
Dost think Marcellus' or proud Cæsar's name,
Or Africanus, Paulus—still resound,
That sculptors proud have effigied their deed?
No, Pandolph, frail the statuary's fame,
For immortality alone is found
Within the records of a poet's meed. WOLLASTON.

* *Orsa.* A play on the word *Orsini.*

THE flower, in youth which virtue's promise bore,
When Love in your pure heart first sought to dwell,
Now beareth fruit that flower which matches well,
And my long hopes are richly come ashore,
Prompting my spirit some glad verse to pour
Where to due honour your high name may swell,
For what can finest marble truly tell
Of living mortal than the form he wore?
Think you great Cæsar's or Marcellus' name,
That Paulus, Africanus to our days,
By anvil or by hammer ever came?
No! frail the sculptor's power for lasting praise:
Our study, my Pandolfo, only can
Give immortality of fame to man. MACGREGOR.

CANZONE XI.*

Mai non vo' più cantar, com' io soleva.

ENIGMAS.

NEVER more shall I sing, as I have sung:
For still she heeded not; and I was scorn'd:
So e'en in loveliest spots is trouble found.
Unceasingly to sigh is no relief.
Already on the Alp snow gathers round:
Already day is near; and I awake.
An affable and modest air is sweet;
And in a lovely lady that she be
Noble and dignified, not proud and cold,
Well pleases it to find.
Love o'er his empire rules without a sword.
He who has miss'd his way let him turn back;
Who has no home the heath must be his bed:
Who lost or has not gold,
Will sate his thirst at the clear crystal spring.

I trusted in Saint Peter, not so now;
Let him who can my meaning understand.
A harsh rule is a heavy weight to bear.

* This, the only known version, is included simply from a wish to represent the original completely, the poem being almost untranslateable into English verse. Italian critics are much divided as to its object. One of the most eminent (Bembo) considers it to be nothing more than an unconnected string of proverbs.

I melt but where I must, and stand alone.
I think of him who falling died in Po;
Already thence the thrush has pass'd the brook;
Come, see if I say sooth! No more for me.
A rock amid the waters is no joke,
Nor birdlime on the twig. Enough my grief
When a superfluous pride
In a fair lady many virtues hides.
There is who answereth without a call;
There is who, though entreated, fails and flies:
There is who melts 'neath ice:
There is who day and night desires his death

Love who loves you, is an old proverb now.
Well know I what I say. But let it pass;
'Tis meet, at their own cost, that men should learn.
A modest lady wearies her best friend.
Good figs are little known. To me it seems
Wise to eschew things hazardous and high;
In any country one may be at ease.
Infinite hope below kills hope above;
And I at times e'en thus have been the talk.
My brief life that remains
There is who'll spurn not if to Him devote.
I place my trust in Him who rules the world,
And who his followers shelters in the wood,
That with his pitying crook
Me will He guide with his own flock to feed.

Haply not every one who reads discerns;
Some set the snare at times who take no spoil;
Who strains too much may break the bow in twain.
Let not the law be lame when suitors watch.
To be at ease we many a mile descend.
To-day's great marvel is to-morrow's scorn.
A veil'd and virgin loveliness is best.
Blessèd the key which pass'd within my heart,
And, quickening my dull spirit, set it free
From its old heavy chain,
And from my bosom banish'd many a sigh.
Where most I suffer'd once she suffers now;
Her equal sorrows mitigate my grief;

Thanks, then, to Love that I
Feel it no more, though he is still the same!

In silence words that wary are and wise;
The voice which drives from me all other care;
And the dark prison which that fair light hides:
As midnight on our hills the violets;
And the wild beasts within the walls who dwell;
The kind demeanour and the dear reserve;
And from two founts one stream which flow'd in peace
Where I desire, collected where I would.
Love and sore jealousy have seized my heart,
And the fair face whose guides
Conduct me by a plainer, shorter way
To my one hope, where all my torments end.
O treasured bliss, and all from thee which flows
Of peace, of war, or truce,
Never abandon me while life is left!

At my past loss I weep by turns and smile,
Because my faith is fix'd in what I hear.
The present I enjoy and better wait;
Silent, I count the years, yet crave their end,
And in a lovely bough I nestle so
That e'en her stern repulse I thank and praise,
Which has at length o'ercome my firm desire,
And inly shown me, I had been the talk,
And pointed at by hand: all this it quench'd.
So much am I urgèd on,
Needs must I own, thou wert not bold enough.
Who pierced me in my side she heals the wound,
For whom in heart more than in ink I write;
Who quickens me or kills,
And in one instant freezes me or fires. ANON.

MADRIGALE III.

Nova angeletta sovra l'ale accorta.

HE ALLEGORICALLY DESCRIBES THE ORIGIN OF HIS PASSION.

FROM heaven an angel upon radiant wings,
New lighted on that shore so fresh and fair,
To which, so doom'd, my faithful footstep clings:
Alone and friendless, when she found me there,
Of gold and silk a finely-woven net,
Where lay my path, 'mid seeming flowers she set;

Thus was I caught, and, for such sweet light shone
From out her eyes, I soon forgot to moan. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXXIV.

Non veggio ove scampar mi possa omai.

AFTER FIFTEEN YEARS HER EYES ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN AT FIRST.

No hope of respite, of escape no way,
Her bright eyes wage such constant havoc here;
Alas! excess of tyranny, I fear,
My doting heart, which ne'er has truce, will slay:
Fain would I flee, but ah! their amorous ray,
Which day and night on memory rises clear,
Shines with such power, in this the fifteenth year,
They dazzle more than in love's early day.
So wide and far their images are spread
That wheresoe'er I turn I alway see
Her, or some sister-light on hers that fed.
Springs such a wood from one fair laurel tree,
That my old foe, with admirable skill,
Amid its boughs misleads me at his will. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXXV.

Avventuroso più d' altro terreno.

HE APOSTROPHIZES THE SPOT WHERE LAURA FIRST SALUTED HIM.

AH, happiest spot of earth! in this sweet place
Love first beheld my condescending fair
Retard her steps, to smile with courteous grace
On me, and smiling glad the ambient air.
The deep-cut image, wrought with skilful care,
Time shall from hardest adamant efface,
Ere from my mind that smile it shall erase,
Dear to my soul! which memory planted there.
Oft as I view thee, heart-enchanting soil!
With amorous awe I'll seek—delightful toil!
Where yet some traces of her footsteps lie.
And if fond Love still warms her generous breast,
Whene'er you see her, gentle friend! request
The tender tribute of a tear—a sigh. ANON. 1777

MOST fortunate and fair of spots terrene!
Where Love I saw her forward footstep stay,
And turn on me her bright eyes' heavenly ray,
Which round them make the atmosphere serene.

A solid form of adamant, I ween,
Would sooner shrink in lapse of time away,
Than from my mind that sweet salute decay,
Dear to my heart, in memory ever green.
And oft as I return to view this spot,
In its fair scenes I'll fondly stoop to seek
Where yet the traces of her light foot lie.
But if in valorous heart Love sleepeth not,
Whene'er you meet her, friend, for me bespeak
Some passing tears, perchance one pitying sigh.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXXVI.

Lasso! quante fiate Amor m' assale.

WHEN LOVE DISTURBS HIM, HE CALMS HIMSELF BY THINKING OF THE BEAUTY AND WORTH OF LAURA.

ALAS! how ceaselessly is urged Love's claim,
By day, by night, a thousand times I turn
Where best I may behold the dear lights burn
Which have immortalized my bosom's flame.
Thus grow I calm, and to such state am brought,
At noon, at break of day, at [illegible]per-bell,
I find them in my mind so [illegible]quil dwell,
I neither think nor care [illegible]r aught.
The balmy air, which from her angel mien,
Moves over with [illegible] words and wise,
Makes wheresoe'er she breathes a sweet serene.
As 'twere a gentle spirit from [illegible] skies,
Still in these scenes some [illegible]rt brings to me,
Nor elsewhere breathes [illegible]s'd heart so free.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXXVII.

[illegible] al luogo usato.

[illegible] EXPECTED ARRIVAL OF LAURA.

[illegible] familiar tried,
[illegible] is found,
[illegible] passes round,
[illegible] relied:
[illegible] side
[illegible] on the ground
[illegible] judgment sound—
[illegible] abide.
I whisper'd to my heart, Why, wherefore fear?

But scarcely did the thought arise within
Than the bright rays in which I burn were here.
As thunders with the lightning-flash begin,
So was I struck at once both blind and mute,
By her dear dazzling eyes and sweet salute. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXXVIII.

La donna che 'l mio cor nel viso porta.

HER KIND AND GENTLE SALUTATION THRILLS HIS HEART WITH PLEASURE.

SHE, in her face who doth my gone heart wear,
As lone I sate 'mid love-thoughts dear and true,
Appear'd before me: to show honour due,
I rose, with pallid brow and reverent air.
Soon as of such my state she was aware,
She turn'd on me with look so soft and new
As, in Jove's greatest fury, might subdue
His rage, and from his hand the thunders tear.
I started: on her further way she pass'd
Graceful, and speaking words I could not brook,
Nor of her lustrous eyes the loving look.
When on that dear salute my thoughts are cast,
So rich and varied do my pleasures flow,
No pain I feel, nor evil fear below. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXXIX.

Sennuccio, i' vo' che sappi in qual maniera.

HE RELATES TO HIS FRIEND SENNUCCIO HIS UNHAPPINESS, AND THE VARIED MOOD OF LAURA.

To thee, Sennuccio, fain would I declare,
To sadden life, what wrongs, what woes I find:
Still glow my wonted flames; and, though resign'd
To Laura's fickle will, no change I bear.
All humble now, then haughty is my fair;
Now meek, then proud; now pitying, then unkind:
Softness and tenderness now sway her mind;
Then do her looks disdain and anger wear.
Here would she sweetly sing, there sit awhile,
Here bend her step, and there her step retard;
Here her bright eyes my easy heart ensnared;
There would she speak fond words, here lovely smile;
There frown contempt;—such wayward cares I prove
By night, by day; so wills our tyrant Love! ANON. 1777.

SOLITUDES OF VAUCLUSE.

Alas, Sennuccio! would thy mind could frame
What now I suffer! what my life's drear reign!
Consumed beneath my heart's continued pain,
At will she guides me—yet am I the same.
Now humble—then doth pride her soul inflame;
Now harsh—then gentle; cruel—kind again;
Now all reserve—then borne on frolic's vein;
Disdain alternates with a milder claim.
Here once she sat, and there so sweetly sang;
Here turn'd to look on me, and lingering stood;
There first her beauteous eyes my spirit stole:
And here she smiled, and there her accents rang,
Her speaking face here told another mood.
Thus Love, our sovereign, holds me in control.

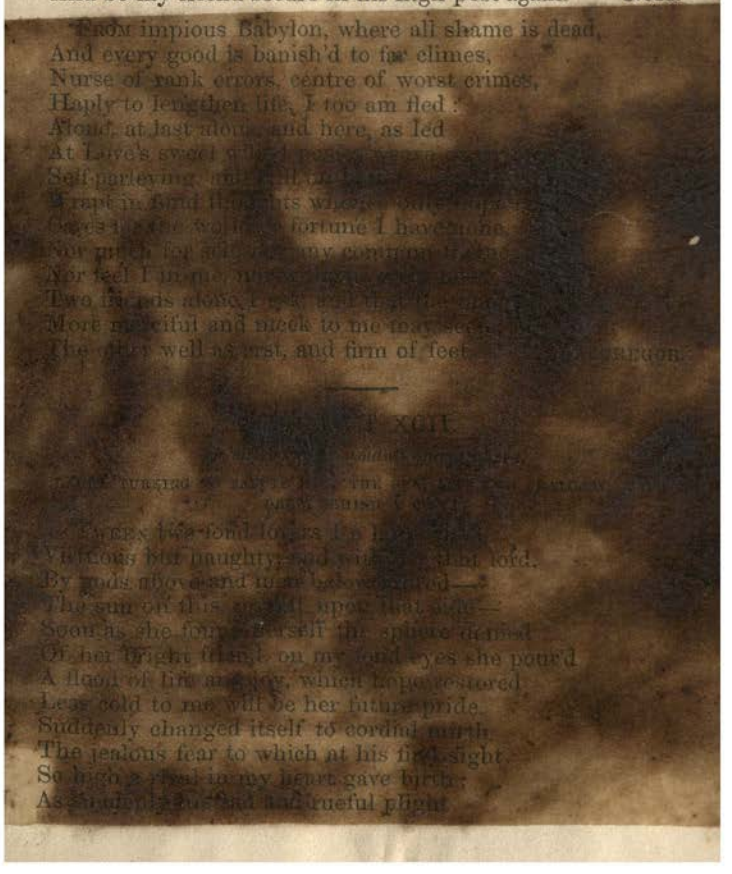
WOLLASTON.

SONNET XC.

SONNET XCI.

Yes, out of impious Babylon I'm flown,
Whence flown all shame, whence banish'd is all good,
That nurse of error, and of guilt th' abode,
To lengthen out a life which else were gone:

There as Love prompts, while wandering alone,
I now a garland weave, and now an ode;
With him I commune, and in pensive mood
Hope better times; this only checks my moan.
Nor for the throng, nor fortune do I care,
Nor for myself, nor sublunary things,
No ardour outwardly, or inly springs:
I ask two persons only: let my fair
For me a kind and tender heart maintain;
And be my friend secure in his high post again. NOTT.



From further scrutiny a small cloud veil'd,
So much it ruffled him that then he fail'd. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XCIII.

Pien di quella ineffabile dolcezza.

WHEREVER HE IS, HE SEES ONLY LAURA.

O'ERFLOWING with the sweets ineffable,
Which from that lovely face my fond eyes drew,
What time they seal'd, for very rapture, grew,
On meaner beauty never more to dwell,
Whom most I love I left: my mind so well
Its part, to muse on her, is train'd to do,
None else it sees; what is not hers to view,
As of old wont, with loathing I repel.
In a low valley shut from all around,
Sole consolation of my heart-deep sighs,
Pensive and slow, with Love I walk alone:
Not ladies here, but rocks and founts are found,
And of that day blest images arise,
Which my thought shapes where'er I turn mine eyes.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET XCIV.

Se 'l sasso ond' è più chiusa questa valle.

COULD HE BUT SEE THE HOUSE OF LAURA, HIS SIGHS MIGHT REACH HER MORE QUICKLY.

IF, which our valley bars, this wall of stone,
From which its present name we closely trace,
Were by disdainful nature rased, and thrown
Its back to Babel and to Rome its face;
Then had my sighs a better pathway known
To where their hope is yet in life and grace:
They now go singly, yet my voice all own;
And, where I send, not one but finds its place.
There too, as I perceive, such welcome sweet
They ever find, that none returns again,
But still delightedly with her remain.
My grief is from the eyes, each morn to meet—
Not the fair scenes my soul so long'd to see—
Toil for my weary limbs and tears for me. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XCV.

Rimansi addietro il sestodecim' anno.

THOUGH HE IS UNHAPPY, HIS LOVE REMAINS EVER UNCHANGED.

My sixteenth year of sighs its course has run,
I stand alone, already on the brow
Where Age descends: and yet it seems as now
My time of trial only were begun.
'Tis sweet to love, and good to be undone;
Though life be hard, more days may Heaven allow
Misfortune to outlive: else Death may bow
The bright head low my loving praise that won.
Here am I now who fain would be elsewhere;
More would I wish and yet no more I would;
I could no more and yet did all I could:
And new tears born of old desires declare
That still I am as I was wont to be,
And that a thousand changes change not me. MACGREGOR.

CANZONE XII.

Una donna più bella assai che 'l sole.

GLORY AND VIRTUE.

A LADY, lovelier, brighter than the sun,
Like him superior o'er all time and space,
Of rare resistless grace,
Me to her train in early life had won:
She, from that hour, in act, and word and thought,
—For still the world thus covets what is rare—
In many ways though brought
Before my search; was still the same coy fair:
For her alone my plans, from what they were,
Grew changed, since nearer subject to her eyes;
Her love alone could spur
My young ambition to each hard emprize:
So, if in long-wish'd port I e'er arrive,
I hope, for aye through her,
When others deem me dead, in honour to survive.

Full of first hope, burning with youthful love,
She, at her will, as plainly now appears,
Has led me many years,
But for one end, my nature best to prove:
Oft showing me her shadow, veil, and dress,
But never her sweet face, till I, who right

Knew not her power to bless,
All my green youth for these, contented quite,
So spent, that still the memory is delight:
Since onward yet some glimpse of her is seen,
I now may own, of late,
Such as till then she ne'er for me had been,
She shows herself, shooting through all my heart
An icy cold so great
That save in her dear arms it ne'er can thence depart.

Not that in this cold fear I all did shrink,
For still my heart was to such boldness strung
That to her feet I clung,
As if more rapture from her eyes to drink:
And she—for now the veil was ta'en away
Which barr'd my sight—thus spoke me, "Friend, you see
How fair I am, and may
Ask, for your years, whatever fittest be."
"Lady," I said, "so long my love on thee
Has fix'd, that now I feel myself on fire,
What, in this state, to shun, and what desire."
She, thereon, with a voice so wond'rous sweet
And earnest look replied,
By turns with hope and fear it made my quick heart beat:—

"Rarely has man, in this full crowd below,
E'en partial knowledge of my worth possess'd
Who felt not in his breast
At least awhile some spark of spirit glow:
But soon my foe, each germ of good abhorr'd,
Quenches that light, and every virtue dies,
While reigns some other lord
Who promises a calmer life shall rise:
Love, of your mind, to him that naked lies,
So shows the great desire with which you burn,
That safely I divine
It yet shall win for you an honour'd urn;
Already one of my few friends you are,
And now shall see in sign
A lady who shall make your fond eyes happier far."

"It may not, cannot be," I thus began;
—When she, "Turn hither, and, in yon calm nook

Upon the lady look
So seldom seen, so little sought of man!"
I turn'd, and o'er my brow the mantling shame,
Within me as I felt that new fire swell,
Of conscious treason came.
She softly smiled, "I understand you well;
E'en as the sun's more powerful rays dispel
And drive the meaner stars of heaven from sight,
So I less fair appear,
Dwindling and darken'd now in her more light;
But not for this I bar you from my train,
As one in jealous fear—
One birth, the elder she, produced us, sisters twain."

Meanwhile the cold and heavy chain was burst
Of silence, which a sense of shame had flung
Around my powerless tongue,
When I was conscious of her notice first:
And thus I spoke, "If what I hear be true,
Bless'd be the sire, and bless'd the natal day
Which graced our world with you!
Blest the long years pass'd in your search away!
From the right path if e'er I went astray,
It grieves me more than, haply, I can show:
But of your state, if I
Deserve more knowledge, more I long to know."
She paused, then, answering pensively, so bent
On me her eloquent eye,
That to my inmost heart her looks and language went:—

"As seem'd to our Eternal Father best,
We two were made immortal at our birth:
To man so small our worth
Better on us that death, like yours, should rest.
Though once beloved and lovely, young and bright,
So slighted are we now, my sister sweet
Already plumes for flight
Her wings to bear her to her own old seat;
Myself am but a shadow thin and fleet;
Thus have I told you, in brief words, whate'er
You sought of us to find:
And now farewell! before I mount in air
This favour take, nor fear that I forget."

Whereat she took and twined
A wreath of laurel green, and round my temples set.

My song! should any deem thy strain obscure,
Say, that I care not, and, ere long to hear,
In certain words and clear,
Truth's welcome message, that my hope is sure;
For this alone, unless I widely err
Of him who set me on the task, I came,
That others I might stir
To honourable acts of high and holy aim. MACGREGOR.

MADRIGALE IV.

Or vedi, Amor, che giovinetta donna.

A PRAYER TO LOVE THAT HE WILL TAKE VENGEANCE ON THE SCORNFUL PRIDE OF LAURA.

Now, Love, at length behold a youthful fair,
Who spurns thy rule, and, mocking all my care,
'Mid two such foes, is safe and fancy free.
Thou art well arm'd, 'mid flowers and verdure she,
In simplest robe and natural tresses found,
Against thee haughty still and harsh to me;
I am thy thrall: but, if thy bow be sound,
If yet one shaft be thine, in pity, take
Vengeance upon her for our common sake. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XCVI.

Quelle pietose rime, in ch' io m' accorsi.

TO ANTONIO OF FERRARA, WHO, IN A POEM, HAD LAMENTED PETRARCH'S SUPPOSED DEATH.

THOSE pious lines wherein are finely met
Proofs of high genius and a spirit kind,
Had so much influence on my grateful mind
That instantly in hand my pen I set
To tell you that death's final blow—which yet
Shall me and every mortal surely find—
I have not felt, though I, too, nearly join'd
The confines of his realm without regret;
But I turn'd back again because I read

Writ o'er the threshold that the time to me
Of life predestinate not all was fled,
Though its last day and hour I could not see.
Then once more let your sad heart comfort know,
And love the living worth which dead it honour'd so.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XCVII.

Dicesett' anni ha già rivolto il cielo.

E'EN IN OUR ASHES LIVE OUR WONTED FIRES.

THE seventeenth summer now, alas! is gone,
And still with ardour unconsumed I glow;
Yet find, whene'er myself I seek to know,
Amidst the fire a frosty chill come on.
Truly 'tis said, 'Ere Habit quits her throne,
Years bleach the hair.' The senses feel life's snow,
But not less hot the tides of passion flow:
Such is our earthly nature's malison!
Oh! come the happy day, when doom'd to smart
No more, from flames and lingering sorrows free,
Calm I may note how fast youth's minutes flew!
Ah! will it e'er be mine the hour to see,
When with delight, nor duty nor my heart
Can blame, these eyes once more that angel face may view?

WRANGHAM.

FOR seventeen summers heaven has o'er me roll'd
Since first I burn'd, nor e'er found respite thence,
But when to weigh our state my thoughts commence
I feel amidst the flames a frosty cold.
We change the form, not nature, is an old
And truthful proverb: thus, to dull the sense
Makes not the human feelings less intense;
The dark shades of our painful veil still hold.
Alas! alas! will e'er that day appear
When, my life's flight beholding, I may find
Issue from endless fire and lingering pain,—
The day which, crowning all my wishes here,
Of that fair face the angel air and kind
Shall to my longing eyes restore again?

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XCVIII.

Quel vago impallidir che 'l dolce riso.

LEAVE-TAKING.

THAT witching paleness, which with cloud of love
Veil'd her sweet smile, majestically bright,
So thrill'd my heart, that from the bosom's night
Midway to meet it on her face it strove.
Then learnt I how, 'mid realms of joy above,
The blest behold the blest: in such pure light
I scann'd her tender thought, to others' sight
Viewless!—but my fond glances would not rove.
Each angel grace, each lowly courtesy,
E'er traced in dame by Love's soft power inspired,
Would seem but foils to those which prompt my lay:
Upon the ground was cast her gentle eye,
And still methought, though silent, she inquired,
"What bears my faithful friend so soon, so far away?"

WRANGHAM.

THERE was a touching paleness on her face,
Which chased her smiles, but such sweet union made
Of pensive majesty and heavenly grace,
As if a passing cloud had veil'd her with its shade;
Then knew I how the blessèd ones above
Gaze on each other in their perfect bliss,
For never yet was look of mortal love
So pure, so tender, so serene as this.
The softest glance fond woman ever sent
To him she loved, would cold and rayless be
Compared to this, which she divinely bent
Earthward, with angel sympathy, on me,
That seem'd with speechless tenderness to say,
"Who takes from me my faithful friend away?"

E. (*New Monthly Magazine.*)

SONNET XCIX.

Amor, Fortuna, e la mia mente schiva.

THE CAUSES OF HIS WOE.

LOVE, Fortune, and my melancholy mind,
Sick of the present, lingering on the past,

Afflict me so, that envious thoughts I cast
On those who life's dark shore have left behind.
Love racks my bosom: Fortune's wintry wind
Kills every comfort: my weak mind at last
Is chafed and pines, so many ills and vast
Expose its peace to constant strifes unkind.
Nor hope I better days shall turn again;
But what is left from bad to worse may pass:
For ah! already life is on the wane.
Not now of adamant, but frail as glass,
I see my best hopes fall from me or fade,
And low in dust my fond thoughts broken laid.

MACGREGOR.

LOVE, Fortune, and my ever-faithful mind,
Which loathes the present in its memoried past,
So wound my spirit, that on all I cast
An envied thought who rest in darkness find.
My heart Love prostrates, Fortune more unkind
No comfort grants, until its sorrow vast
Impotent frets, then melts to tears at last:
Thus I to painful warfare am consign'd.
My halcyon days I hope not to return,
But paint my future by a darker tint;
My spring is gone—my summer well-nigh fled:
Ah! wretched me! too well do I discern
Each hope is now (unlike the diamond flint)
A fragile mirror, with its fragments shed. WOLLASTON.

CANZONE XIII.

Se 'l pensier che mi strugge.

HE SEEKS IN VAIN TO MITIGATE HIS WOE.

OH! that my cheeks were taught
By the fond, wasting thought
To wear such hues as could its influence speak;
Then the dear, scornful fair
Might all my ardour share;
And where Love slumbers now he might awake!
Less oft the hill and mead
My wearied feet should tread;

Less oft, perhaps, these eyes with tears should stream;
If she, who cold as snow,
With equal fire would glow—
She who dissolves me, and converts to flame.

Since Love exerts his sway,
And bears my sense away,
I chant uncouth and inharmonious songs:
Nor leaves, nor blossoms show,
Nor rind, upon the bough,
What is the nature that thereto belongs.
Love, and those beauteous eyes,
Beneath whose shade he lies,
Discover all the heart can comprehend:
When vented are my cares
In loud complaints, and tears;
These harm myself, and others those offend.

Sweet lays of sportive vein,
Which help'd me to sustain
Love's first assault, the only arms I bore;
This flinty breast say who
Shall once again subdue,
That I with song may soothe me as before?
Some power appears to trace
Within me Laura's face,
Whispers her name; and straight in verse I strive
To picture her again,
But the fond effort's vain:
Me of my solace thus doth Fate deprive.

E'en as some babe unties
Its tongue in stammering guise,
Who cannot speak, yet will not silence keep:
So fond words I essay;
And listen'd be the lay
By my fair foe, ere in the tomb I sleep!
But if, of beauty vain,
She treats me with disdain;
Do thou, O verdant shore, attend my sighs:
Let them so freely flow,
That all the world may know,
My sorrow thou at least didst not despise!

And well art thou aware,
That never foot so fair
The soil e'er press'd as that which trod thee late:
My sunk soul and worn heart
Now seek thee, to impart
The secret griefs that on my passion wait.
If on thy margent green,
Or 'midst thy flowers, were seen
Some traces of her footsteps lingering there,
My wearied life 'twould cheer,
Bitter'd with many a tear:
Ah! now what means are left to soothe my care?

Where'er I bend mine eye,
What sweet serenity
I feel, to think here Laura shone of yore.
Each plant and scented bloom
I gather, seems to come
From where she wander'd on the custom'd shore:
Ofttimes in this retreat
A fresh and fragrant seat
She found; at least so fancy's vision shows:
And never let truth seek
Th' illusion dear to break—
O spirit blest, from whom such magic flows!

To thee, my simple song,
No polish doth belong;
Thyself art conscious of thy little worth:
Solicit not renown
Throughout the busy town,
But dwell within the shade that gave thee birth. NOTT.

CANZONE XIV.

Chiare, fresche e dolci acque.

TO THE FOUNTAIN OF VAUCLUSE—CONTEMPLATIONS OF DEATH.

YE limpid brooks, by whose clear streams
My goddess laid her tender limbs!
Ye gentle boughs, whose friendly shade
Gave shelter to the lovely maid!
Ye herbs and flowers, so sweetly press'd
By her soft rising snowy breast!

Ye Zephyrs mild, that breathed around
The place where Love my heart did wound!
Now at my summons all appear,
And to my dying words give ear.

If then my destiny requires,
And Heaven with my fate conspires,
That Love these eyes should weeping close,
Here let me find a soft repose.
So Death will less my soul affright,
And, free from dread, my weary spright
Naked alone will dare t' essay
The still unknown, though beaten way;
Pleased that her mortal part will have
So safe a port, so sweet a grave.

The cruel fair, for whom I burn,
May one day to these shades return,
And smiling with superior grace,
Her lover seek around this place,
And when instead of me she finds
Some crumbling dust toss'd by the winds,
She may feel pity in her breast,
And, sighing, wish me happy rest,
Drying her eyes with her soft veil,
Such tears must sure with Heaven prevail.

Well I remember how the flowers
Descended from these boughs in showers,
Encircled in the fragrant cloud
She sat, nor 'midst such glory proud.
These blossoms to her lap repair,
These fall upon her flowing hair,
(Like pearls enchased in gold they seem,)
These on the ground, these on the stream;
In giddy rounds these dancing say,
Here Love and Laura only sway.

In rapturous wonder oft I said,
Sure she in Paradise was made,
Thence sprang that bright angelic state,
Those looks, those words, that heavenly gait,
That beauteous smile, that voice divine,
Those graces that around her shine:

Transported I beheld the fair,
And sighing cried, How came I here?
In heaven, amongst th' immortal blest,
Here let me fix and ever rest. MOLESWORTH.

YE waters clear and fresh, to whose bright wave
She all her beauties gave,—
Sole of her sex in my impassion'd mind!
Thou sacred branch so graced,
(With sighs e'en now retraced!)
On whose smooth shaft her heavenly form reclined!
Herbage and flowers that bent the robe beneath,
Whose graceful folds compress'd
Her pure angelic breast!
Ye airs serene, that breathe
Where Love first taught me in her eyes his lore!
Yet once more all attest,
The last sad plaintive lay my woe-worn heart may pour!

If so I must my destiny fulfil,
And Love to close these weeping eyes be doom'd
By Heaven's mysterious will,
Oh! grant that in this loved retreat, entomb'd,
My poor remains may lie,
And my freed soul regain its native sky!
Less rude shall Death appear,
If yet a hope so dear
Smooth the dread passage to eternity!
No shade so calm—serene,
My weary spirit finds on earth below;
No grave so still—so green,
In which my o'ertoil'd frame may rest from mortal woe!

Yet one day, haply, she—so heavenly fair!
So kind in cruelty!—
With careless steps may to these haunts repair,
And where her beaming eye
Met mine in days so blest,
A wistful glance may yet unconscious rest,
And seeking me around,
May mark among the stones a lowly mound,
That speaks of pity to the shuddering sense!
Then may she breathe a sigh,

Of power to win me mercy from above!
Doing Heaven violence,
All-beautiful in tears of late relenting love!

Still dear to memory! when, in odorous showers,
Scattering their balmy flowers,
To summer airs th' o'ershadowing branches bow'd,
The while, with humble state,
In all the pomp of tribute sweets she sate,
Wrapt in the roseate cloud!
Now clustering blossoms deck her vesture's hem,
Now her bright tresses gem,—
(In that all-blissful day,
Like burnish'd gold with orient pearls inwrought,)
Some strew the turf—some on the waters float!
Some, fluttering, seem to say
In wanton circlets toss'd, "Here Love holds sovereign sway!"

Oft I exclaim'd, in awful tremor rapt,
"Surely of heavenly birth
This gracious form that visits the low earth!"
So in oblivion lapp'd
Was reason's power, by the celestial mien,
The brow,—the accents mild—
The angelic smile serene!
That now all sense of sad reality
O'erborne by transport wild,—
"Alas! how came I here, and when?" I cry,—
Deeming my spirit pass'd into the sky!
E'en though the illusion cease,
In these dear haunts alone my tortured heart finds peace.

If thou wert graced with numbers sweet, my song!
To match thy wish to please;
Leaving these rocks and trees,
Thou boldly might'st go forth, and dare th' assembled throng.

DACRE.

CLEAR, fresh, and dulcet streams,
Which the fair shape, who seems
To me sole woman, haunted at noon-tide;
Fair bough, so gently fit,
(I sigh to think of it,)

Which lent a pillar to her lovely side;
And turf, and flowers bright-eyed,
O'er which her folded gown
Flow'd like an angel's down;
And you, O holy air and hush'd,
Where first my heart at her sweet glances gush'd;
Give ear, give ear, with one consenting,
To my last words, my last and my lamenting.

If 'tis my fate below,
And Heaven will have it so,
That Love must close these dying eyes in tears,
May my poor dust be laid
In middle of your shade,
While my soul, naked, mounts to its own spheres.
The thought would calm my fears,
When taking, out of breath,
The doubtful step of death;
For never could my spirit find
A stiller port after the stormy wind;
Nor in more calm, abstracted bourne,
Slip from my travail'd flesh, and from my bones outworn.

Perhaps, some future hour,
To her accustom'd bower
Might come the untamed, and yet the gentle she;
And where she saw me first,
Might turn with eyes athirst
And kinder joy to look again for me;
Then, oh! the charity!
Seeing amidst the stones
The earth that held my bones,
A sigh for very love at last
Might ask of Heaven to pardon me the past:
And Heaven itself could not say nay,
As with her gentle veil she wiped the tears away.

How well I call to mind,
When from those boughs the wind
Shook down upon her bosom flower on flower;
And there she sat, meek-eyed,
In midst of all that pride,
Sprinkled and blushing through an amorous shower.
Some to her hair paid dower,

And seem'd to dress the curls,
Queenlike, with gold and pearls;
Some, snowing, on her drapery stopp'd,
Some on the earth, some on the water dropp'd;
While others, fluttering from above,
Seem'd wheeling round in pomp, and saying, "Here reigns Love."

How often then I said,
Inward, and fill'd with dread,
"Doubtless this creature came from Paradise!"
For at her look the while,
Her voice, and her sweet smile,
And heavenly air, truth parted from mine eyes;
So that, with long-drawn sighs,
I said, as far from men,
"How came I here, and when?"
I had forgotten; and alas!
Fancied myself in heaven, not where I was;
And from that time till this, I bear
Such love for the green bower, I cannot rest elsewhere.

LEIGH HUNT.

CANZONE XV.

In quella parte dov' Amor mi sprona.

HE FINDS HER IMAGE EVERYWHERE.

WHEN Love, fond Love, commands the strain,
The coyest muse must sure obey;
Love bids my wounded breast complain,
And whispers the melodious lay:
Yet when such griefs restrain the muse's wing,
How shall she dare to soar, or how attempt to sing?

Oh! could my heart express its woe,
How poor, how wretched should I seem!
But as the plaintive accents flow,
Soft comfort spreads her golden gleam;
And each gay scene, that Nature holds to view,
Bids Laura's absent charms to memory bloom anew.

Though Fate's severe decrees remove
Her gladsome beauties from my sight,

Yet, urged by pity, friendly Love
Bids fond reflection yield delight;
If lavish spring with flowerets strews the mead,
Her lavish beauties all to fancy are display'd!

When to this globe the solar beams
Their full meridian blaze impart,
It pictures Laura, that inflames
With passion's fires each human heart:
And when the sun completes his daily race,
I see her riper age complete each growing grace.

When milder planets, warmer skies
O'er winter's frozen reign prevail;
When groves are tinged with vernal dyes,
And violets scent the wanton gale;
Those flowers, the verdure, then recall that day,
In which my Laura stole this heedless heart away.

The blush of health, that crimson'd o'er
Her youthful cheek; her modest mien;
The gay-green garment that she wore,
Have ever dear to memory been;
More dear they grow as time the more inflames
This tender breast o'ercome by passion's wild extremes!

The sun, whose cheering lustre warms
The bosom of yon snow-clad hill,
Seems a just emblem of the charms,
Whose power controls my vanquish'd will;
When near, they gild with joy this frozen heart,
Where ceaseless winter reigns, whene'er those charms depart.

Yon sun, too, paints the locks of gold,
That play around her face so fair—
Her face which, oft as I behold,
Prompts the soft sigh of amorous care!
While Laura smiles, all-conscious of that love
Which from this faithful breast no time can e'er remove.

If to the transient storm of night
Succeeds a star-bespangled sky,
And the clear rain-drops catch the light,
Glittering on all the foliage nigh;

Methinks her eyes I view, as on that day
When through the envious veil they shot their magic ray.

With brightness making heaven more bright,
As then they did, I see them now;
I see them, when the morning light
Purples the misty mountain's brow:
When day declines, and darkness spreads the pole;
Methinks 'tis Laura flies, and sadness wraps my soul.

In stately jars of burnish'd gold
Should lilies spread their silvery pride,
With fresh-blown roses that unfold
Their leaves, in heaven's own crimson dyed;
Then Laura's bloom I see, and sunny hair
Flowing adown her neck than ivory whiter far.

The flowerets brush'd by zephyr's wing,
Waving their heads in frolic play,
Oft to my fond remembrance bring
The happy spot, the happier day,
In which, disporting with the gale, I view'd
Those sweet unbraided locks, that all my heart subdued.

Oh! could I count those orbs that shine
Nightly o'er yon ethereal plain,
Or in some scanty vase confine
Each drop that ocean's bounds contain,
Then might I hope to fly from beauty's rays,
Laura o'er flaming worlds can spread bright beauty's blaze.

Should I all heaven, all earth-explore,
I still should lovely Laura find;
Laura, whose beauties I adore,
Is ever present to my mind:
She's seen in all that strikes these partial eyes,
And her dear name still dwells in all my tender sighs.

But soft, my song,—not thine the power
To paint that never-dying flame,
Which gilds through life the gloomy hour,
Which nurtures this love-wasted frame;
For since with Laura dwells my wander'd heart,
Cheer'd by that fostering flame, I brave Death's ebon dart.

ANON. 1777.

CANZONE XVI.

Italia mia, benchè 'l parlar sia indarno.

TO THE PRINCES OF ITALY, EXHORTING THEM TO SET HER FREE.

O MY own Italy! though words are vain
The mortal wounds to close,
Unnumber'd, that thy beauteous bosom stain,
Yet may it soothe my pain
To sigh forth Tyber's woes,
And Arno's wrongs, as on Po's sadden'd shore
Sorrowing I wander, and my numbers pour.
Ruler of heaven! By the all-pitying love
That could thy Godhead move
To dwell a lowly sojourner on earth,
Turn, Lord! on this thy chosen land thine eye:
See, God of Charity!
From what light cause this cruel war has birth;
And the hard hearts by savage discord steel'd,
Thou, Father! from on high,
Touch by my humble voice, that stubborn wrath may yield!

Ye, to whose sovereign hands the fates confide
Of this fair land the reins,—
(This land for which no pity wrings your breast)—
Why does the stranger's sword her plains invest?
That her green fields be dyed,
Hope ye, with blood from the Barbarians' veins?
Beguiled by error weak,
Ye see not, though to pierce so deep ye boast,
Who love, or faith, in venal bosoms seek:
When throng'd your standards most,
Ye are encompass'd most by hostile bands.
O hideous deluge gather'd in strange lands,
That rushing down amain
O'erwhelms our every native lovely plain!
Alas! if our own hands
Have thus our weal betray'd, who shall our cause sustain?

Well did kind Nature, guardian of our state,
Rear her rude Alpine heights,
A lofty rampart against German hate;
But blind ambition, seeking his own ill,

With ever restless will,
To the pure gales contagion foul invites:
Within the same strait fold
The gentle flocks and wolves relentless throng,
Where still meek innocence must suffer wrong:
And these,—oh, shame avow'd!—
Are of the lawless hordes no tie can hold:
Fame tells how Marius' sword
Erewhile their bosoms gored,—
Nor has Time's hand aught blurr'd the record proud!
When they who, thirsting, stoop'd to quaff the flood,
With the cool waters mix'd, drank of a comrade's blood!

Great Cæsar's name I pass, who o'er our plains
Pour'd forth the ensanguin'd tide,
Drawn by our own good swords from out their veins;
But now—nor know I what ill stars preside—
Heaven holds this land in hate!
To you the thanks!—whose hands control her helm!—
You, whose rash feuds despoil
Of all the beauteous earth the fairest realm!
Are ye impell'd by judgment, crime, or fate,
To oppress the desolate?
From broken fortunes, and from humble toil,
The hard-earn'd dole to wring,
While from afar ye bring
Dealers in blood, bartering their souls for hire?
In truth's great cause I sing,
Nor hatred nor disdain my earnest lay inspire.

Nor mark ye yet, confirm'd by proof on proof,
Bavaria's perfidy,
Who strikes in mockery, keeping death aloof?
(Shame, worse than aught of loss, in honour's eye!)
While ye, with honest rage, devoted pour
Your inmost bosom's gore!—
Yet give one hour to thought,
And ye shall own, how little he can hold
Another's glory dear, who sets his own at nought.
O Latin blood of old!
Arise, and wrest from obloquy thy fame,
Nor bow before a name

Of hollow sound, whose power no laws enforce!
For if barbarians rude
Have higher minds subdued,
Ours! ours the crime!—not such wise Nature's course.

Ah! is not this the soil my foot first press'd?
And here, in cradled rest,
Was I not softly hush'd?—here fondly rear'd?
Ah! is not this my country?—so endear'd
By every filial tie!
In whose lap shrouded both my parents lie!
Oh! by this tender thought,
Your torpid bosoms to compassion wrought,
Look on the people's grief!
Who, after God, of you expect relief;
And if ye but relent,
Virtue shall rouse her in embattled might,
Against blind fury bent,
Nor long shall doubtful hang the unequal fight;
For no,—the ancient flame
Is not extinguish'd yet, that raised the Italian name!

Mark, sovereign Lords! how Time, with pinion strong,
Swift hurries life along!
E'en now, behold! Death presses on the rear.
We sojourn here a day—the next, are gone!
The soul disrobed—alone,
Must shuddering seek the doubtful pass we fear.
Oh! at the dreaded bourne,
Abase the lofty brow of wrath and scorn,
(Storms adverse to the eternal calm on high!)
And ye, whose cruelty
Has sought another's harm, by fairer deed
Of heart, or hand, or intellect, aspire
To win the honest meed
Of just renown—the noble mind's desire!
Thus sweet on earth the stay!
Thus to the spirit pure, unbarr'd is Heaven's way!

My song! with courtesy, and numbers sooth,
Thy daring reasons grace,
For thou the mighty, in their pride of place,
Must woo to gentle ruth,

Whose haughty will long evil customs nurse,
Ever to truth averse!
Thee better fortunes wait,
Among the virtuous few—the truly great!
Tell them—but who shall bid my terrors cease?
Peace! Peace! on thee I call! return, O heaven-born Peace!

DACRE.

* * * * * *

SEE Time, that flies, and spreads his hasty wing!
See Life, how swift it runs the race of years,
And on its weary shoulders death appears!
Now all is life and all is spring:
Think on the winter and the darker day
When the soul, naked and alone,
Must prove the dubious step, the still unknown,
Yet ever beaten way.
And through this fatal vale
Would you be wafted with some gentle gale?
Put off that eager strife and fierce disdain,
Clouds that involve our life's serene,
And storms that ruffle all the scene;
Your precious hours, misspent in others' pain,
On nobler deeds, worthy yourselves, bestow;
Whether with hand or wit you raise
Some monument of peaceful praise,
Some happy labour of fair love:
'Tis all of heaven that you can find below,
And opens into all above.

BASIL KENNET.

CANZONE XVII.

Di pensier in pensier, di monte in monte.

DISTANCE AND SOLITUDE.

FROM hill to hill I roam, from thought to thought,
With Love my guide; the beaten path I fly,
For there in vain the tranquil life is sought:
If 'mid the waste well forth a lonely rill,
Or deep embosom'd a low valley lie,
In its calm shade my trembling heart is still;
And there, if Love so will,

I smile, or weep, or fondly hope, or fear,
While on my varying brow, that speaks the soul,
The wild emotions roll,
Now dark, now bright, as shifting skies appear;
That whosoe'er has proved the lover's state
Would say, He feels the flame, nor knows his future fate.

On mountains high, in forests drear and wide,
I find repose, and from the throng'd resort
Of man turn fearfully my eyes aside;
At each lone step thoughts ever new arise
Of her I love, who oft with cruel sport
Will mock the pangs I bear, the tears, the sighs;
Yet e'en these ills I prize,
Though bitter, sweet, nor would they were removed:
For my heart whispers me, Love yet has power
To grant a happier hour:
Perchance, though self-despised, thou yet art loved:
E'en then my breast a passing sigh will heave,
Ah! when, or how, may I a hope so wild believe?

Where shadows of high rocking pines dark wave
I stay my footsteps, and on some rude stone
With thought intense her beauteous face engrave;
Roused from the trance, my bosom bathed I find
With tears, and cry, Ah! whither thus alone
Hast thou far wander'd, and whom left behind?
But as with fixèd mind
On this fair image I impassion'd rest,
And, viewing her, forget awhile my ills,
Love my rapt fancy fills;
In its own error sweet the soul is blest,
While all around so bright the visions glide;
Oh! might the cheat endure, I ask not aught beside.

Her form portray'd within the lucid stream
Will oft appear, or on the verdant lawn,
Or glossy beech, or fleecy cloud, will gleam
So lovely fair, that Leda's self might say,
Her Helen sinks eclipsed, as at the dawn
A star when cover'd by the solar ray:
And, as o'er wilds I stray

Where the eye nought but savage nature meets,
There Fancy most her brightest tints employs;
But when rude truth destroys
The loved illusion of those dreamèd sweets,
I sit me down on the cold rugged stone,
Less cold, less dead than I, and think, and weep alone.

Where the huge mountain rears his brow sublime,
On which no neighbouring height its shadow flings,
Led by desire intense the steep I climb;
And tracing in the boundless space each woe,
Whose sad remembrance my torn bosom wrings,
Tears, that bespeak the heart o'erfraught, will flow:
While, viewing all below,
From me, I cry, what worlds of air divide
The beauteous form, still absent and still near!
Then, chiding soft the tear,
I whisper low, haply she too has sigh'd
That thou art far away: a thought so sweet
Awhile my labouring soul will of its burthen cheat.

Go thou, my song, beyond that Alpine bound,
Where the pure smiling heavens are most serene,
There by a murmuring stream may I be found,
Whose gentle airs around
Waft grateful odours from the laurel green;
Nought but my empty form roams here unblest,
There dwells my heart with her who steals it from my breast.

DACRE.

SONNET C.

Poi che 'l cammin m' è chiuso di mercede.

THOUGH FAR FROM LAURA, SOLITARY AND UNHAPPY, ENVY STILL PURSUES HIM.

SINCE mercy's door is closed, alas! to me,
And hopeless paths my poor life separate
From her in whom, I know not by what fate,
The guerdon lay of all my constancy,
My heart that lacks not other food, on sighs
I feed: to sorrow born, I live on tears:
Nor therefore mourn I: sweeter far appears
My present grief than others can surmise.

On thy dear portrait rests alone my view,
Which nor Praxiteles nor Xeuxis drew,
But a more bold and cunning pencil framed.
What shore can hide me, or what distance shield,
If by my cruel exile yet untamed
Insatiate Envy finds me here concealed? MACGREGOR.

SONNET CI.

Io canterei d' Amor sì novamente.

REPLY TO A SONNET OF JACOPO DA LENTINO.

WAYS apt and new to sing of love I'd find,
Forcing from her hard heart full many a sigh,
And re-enkindle in her frozen mind
Desires a thousand, passionate and high;
O'er her fair face would see each swift change pass,
See her fond eyes at length where pity reigns,
As one who sorrows when too late, alas!
For his own error and another's pains;
See the fresh roses edging that fair snow
Move with her breath, that ivory descried,
Which turns to marble him who sees it near;
See all, for which in this brief life below
Myself I weary not but rather pride
That Heaven for later times has kept me here.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET CII.

S'Amor non è, che dunque è quel ch' i' sento?

THE CONTRADICTIONS OF LOVE.

IF no love is, O God, what fele I so?
And if love is, what thing and which is he?
If love be gode, from whence cometh my woe?
If it be wicke, a wonder thinketh me
When every torment and adversite
That cometh of him may to me savory thinke:
For aye more thurst I the more that I drinke.
And if that at my owne lust I brenne,
From whence cometh my wailing and my pleinte?
If harme agre me whereto pleine I thenne?

I n'ot nere why unwery that I feinte.
O quickè deth, O surelè harme so quainte,
How may I see in me such quantite,
But if that I consent that so it be? CHAUCER.

IF 'tis not love, what is it feel I then?
If 'tis, how strange a thing, sweet powers above!
If love be kind, why does it fatal prove?
If cruel, why so pleasing is the pain?
If 'tis my will to love, why weep, why plain?
If not my will, tears cannot love remove.
O living death! O rapturous pang!—why, love!
If I consent not, canst thou o'er me reign?
If I consent, 'tis wrongfully I mourn:
Thus on a stormy sea my bark is borne
By adverse winds, and with rough tempest tost;
Thus unenlightened, lost in error's maze,
My blind opinion ever dubious strays;
I'm froze by summer, scorched by winter's frost.
ANON. 1777.

SONNET CIII.

Amor m' ha posto come segno a strale.

LOVE'S ARMOURY.

LOVE makes me as the target for his dart,
As snow in sunshine, or as wax in flame,
Or gale-driven cloud; and, Laura, on thy name
I call, but thou no pity wilt impart.
Thy radiant eyes first caused my bosom's smart;
No time, no place can shield me from their beam;
From thee (but, ah, thou treat'st it as a dream!)
Proceed the torments of my suffring heart.
Each thought's an arrow, and thy face a sun;
My passion's flame: and these doth Love employ
To wound my breast, to dazzle, and destroy.
Thy heavenly song, thy speech with which I'm won,
All thy sweet breathings of such strong controul,
Form the dear gale that bears away my soul. NOTT.

ME Love has placed as mark before the dart,
As to the sun the snow, as wax to fire,
As clouds to wind: Lady, e'en now I tire,
Craving the mercy which never warms thy heart.

From those bright eyes was aim'd the mortal blow,
'Gainst which nor time nor place avail'd me aught;
From thee alone—nor let it strange be thought—
The sun, the fire, the wind whence I am so.
The darts are thoughts of thee, thy face the sun,
The fire my passion; such the weapons be
With which at will Love dazzles yet destroys.
Thy fragrant breath and angel voice—which won
My heart that from its thrall shall ne'er be free—
The wind which vapour-like my frail life flies. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CIV.

Pace non trovo, e non ho da far guerra.

LOVE'S INCONSISTENCY.

I FYNDE no peace and all my warre is done,
I feare and hope, I bourne and freese lyke yse;
I flyé above the wynde, yet cannot ryse;
And nought I have, yet all the worlde I season,
That looseth, nor lacketh, holdes me in pryson,
And holdes me not, yet can I escape no wyse.
Nor lets me leeve, nor die at my devyce,
And yet of death it giveth none occasion.
Without eye I see, and without tongue I playne;
I desyre to perishe, yet aske I health;
I love another, and yet I hate my self;
I feede in sorrow and laughe in all my payne,
Lykewyse pleaseth me both death and lyf,
And my delight is cawser of my greif. WYATT.*

WARFARE I cannot wage, yet know not peace;
I fear, I hope, I burn, I freeze again;
Mount to the skies, then bow to earth my face;
Grasp the whole world, yet nothing can obtain.
His prisoner Love nor frees, nor will detain;
In toils he holds me not, nor will release;
He slays me not, nor yet will he unchain;
Nor joy allows, nor lets my sorrow cease.
Sightless I see my fair; though mute, I mourn;
I scorn existence, and yet court its stay;
Detest myself, and for another burn;
By grief I'm nurtured; and, though tearful, gay;

* Harrington's Nugæ Antiquæ.

Death I despise, and life alike I hate:
Such, lady, dost thou make my wayward state! NOTT.

CANZONE XVIII.

Qual più diversa e nova.

HE COMPARES HIMSELF TO ALL THAT IS MOST STRANGE IN CREATION.

WHATE'ER most wild and new
Was ever found in any foreign land,
If viewed and valued true,
Most likens me 'neath Love's transforming hand.
Whence the bright day breaks through,
Alone and consortless, a bird there flies,
Who voluntary dies,
To live again regenerate and entire:
So ever my desire,
Alone, itself repairs, and on the crest
Of its own lofty thoughts turns to our sun,
There melts and is undone,
And sinking to its first state of unrest,
So burns and dies, yet still its strength resumes,
And, Phœnix-like, afresh in force and beauty blooms.

Where Indian billows sweep,
A wondrous stone there is, before whose strength
Stout navies, weak to keep
Their binding iron, sink engulf'd at length:
So prove I, in this deep
Of bitter grief, whom, with her own hard pride,
That fair rock knew to guide
Where now my life in wreck and ruin drives:
Thus too the soul deprives,
By theft, my heart, which once so stonelike was,
It kept my senses whole, now far dispersed:
For mine, O fate accurst!
A rock that lifeblood and not iron draws,
Whom still i' the flesh a magnet living, sweet,
Drags to the fatal shore a certain doom to meet.

'Neath the far Ethiop skies
A beast is found, most mild and meek of air,
Which seems, yet in her eyes
Danger and dool and death she still does bear:

Much needs he to be wise
To look on hers whoever turns his mien:
Although her eyes unseen,
All else securely may be viewed at will;
But I to mine own ill
Run ever in rash grief, though well I know
My sufferings past and future, still my mind
Its eager, deaf and blind
Desire o'ermasters and unhinges so,
That in her fine eyes and sweet sainted face,
Fatal, angelic, pure, my cause of death I trace.

In the rich South there flows
A fountain from the sun its name that wins,
This marvel still that shows,
Boiling at night, but chill when day begins;
Cold, yet more cold it grows
As the sun's mounting car we nearer see:
So happens it with me
(Who am, alas! of tears the source and seat),
When the bright light and sweet,
My only sun retires, and lone and drear
My eyes are left, in night's obscurest reign,
I burn, but if again
The gold rays of the living sun appear,
My slow blood stiffens, instantaneous, strange,
Within me and without I feel the frozen change!

Another fount of fame
Springs in Epirus, which, as bards have told,
Kindles the lurking flame,
And the live quenches, while itself is cold.
My soul, that, uncontroll'd,
And scathless from love's fire till now had pass'd,
Carelessly left at last
Near the cold fair for whom I ceaseless sigh,
Was kindled instantly:
Like martyrdom, ne'er known by day or night,
A heart of marble had to mercy shamed.
Which first her charms inflamed
Her fair and frozen virtue quenched the light;
That thus she crushed and kindled my heart's fire,
Well know I who have felt in long and useless ire.

Beyond our earth's known brinks,
In the famed Islands of the Blest, there be
Two founts: of this who drinks
Dies smiling: who of that to live is free.
A kindred fate Heaven links
To my sad life, who, smilingly, could die
For like o'erflowing joy,
But soon such bliss new cries of anguish stay.
Love! still who guidest my way,
Where, dim and dark, the shade of fame invites,
Not of that fount we speak, which, full each hour,
Ever with larger power
O'erflows, when Taurus with the Sun unites;
So are my eyes with constant sorrow wet,
But in that season most when I my Lady met.

Should any ask, my Song!
Or how or where I am, to such reply:
Where the tall mountain throws
Its shade, in the lone vale, whence Sorga flows,
He roams, where never eye
Save Love's, who leaves him not a step, is by,
And one dear image who his peace destroys,
Alone with whom to muse all else in life he flies.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CV.

Fiamma dal ciel su le tue trecce piova.

HE INVEIGHS AGAINST THE COURT OF ROME.

Vengeaunce must fall on thee, thow filthie whore
Of Babilon, thow breaker of Christ's fold,
That from achorns, and from the water colde,
Art riche become with making many poore.
Thow treason's neste that in thie harte dost holde
Of cankard malice, and of myschief more
Than pen can wryte, or may with tongue be tolde,
Slave to delights that chastitie hath solde;
For wyne and ease which settith all thie store
Uppon whoredome and none other lore,
In thye pallais of strompetts yonge and olde
Theare walks Plentie, and Belzebub thye Lorde;

Guydes thee and them, and doth thye raigne upholde:
It is but late, as wryting will recorde,
That poore thow weart withouten lande or goolde;
Yet now hathe golde and pryde, by one accorde,
In wickednesse so spreadd thie lyf abrode,
That it dothe stincke before the face of God. (?) WYATT.*

MAY fire from heaven rain down upon thy head,
Thou most accurst; who simple fare casts by,
Made rich and great by others' poverty;
How dost thou glory in thy vile misdeed!
Nest of all treachery, in which is bred
Whate'er of sin now through the world doth fly;
Of wine the slave, of sloth, of gluttony;
With sensuality's excesses fed!
Old men and harlots through thy chambers dance;
Then in the midst see Belzebub advance
With mirrors and provocatives obscene.
Erewhile thou wert not shelter'd, nursed on down;
But naked, barefoot on the straw wert thrown:
Now rank to heaven ascends thy life unclean. NOTT.

SONNET CVI.

L' avara Babilonia ha colmo 'l sacco.

HE PREDICTS TO ROME THE ARRIVAL OF SOME GREAT PERSONAGE WHO WILL BRING HER BACK TO HER OLD VIRTUE.

COVETOUS Babylon of wrath divine
By its worst crimes has drain'd the full cup now,
And for its future Gods to whom to bow
Not Pow'r nor Wisdom ta'en, but Love and Wine.
Though hoping reason, I consume and pine,
Yet shall her crown deck some new Soldan's brow,
Who shall again build up, and we avow
One faith in God, in Rome one head and shrine.
Her idols shall be shatter'd, in the dust
Her proud towers, enemies of Heaven, be hurl'd,
Her wardens into flames and exile thrust,
Fair souls and friends of virtue shall the world
Possess in peace; and we shall see it made
All gold, and fully its old works display'd. MACGREGOR.

* Harrington's Nugæ Antiquæ.

SONNET CVII.

Fontana di dolore, albergo d' ira.

HE ATTRIBUTES THE WICKEDNESS OF THE COURT OF ROME TO ITS GREAT WEALTH.

Spring of all woe, O den of curssed ire,
Scoole of errour, temple of heresye;
Thow Pope, I meane, head of hypocrasye,
Thow and thie churche, unsaciat of desyre,
Have all the world filled full of myserye;
Well of disceate, thow dungeon full of fyre,
That hydes all truthe to breed idolatrie.
Thow wicked wretche, Chryste cannot be a lyer,
Behold, therefore, thie judgment hastelye;
Thye first founder was gentill povertie,
But there against is all thow dost requyre.
Thow shameless beaste wheare hast thow thie trust,
In thie whoredome, or in thie riche attyre?
Loe! Constantyne, that is turned into dust,
Shall not retourne for to mayntaine thie lust;
But now his heires, that might not sett thee higher,
For thie greate pryde shall teare thye seate asonder,
And scourdge thee so that all the world shall wonder.

(?) WYATT.*

FOUNTAIN of sorrows, centre of mad ire,
Rank error's school and fane of heresy,
Once Rome, now Babylon, the false and free,
Whom fondly we lament and long desire.
O furnace of deceits, O prison dire,
Where good roots die and the ill-weed grows a tree
Hell upon earth, great marvel will it be
If Christ reject thee not in endless fire.
Founded in humble poverty and chaste,
Against thy founders lift'st thou now thy horn,
Impudent harlot! Is thy hope then placed
In thine adult'ries and thy wealth ill-born?
Since comes no Constantine his own to claim,
The vext world must endure, or end its shame.

MACGREGOR.

* Harrington's Nugæ Antiquæ.

SONNET CVIII.

Quanto più desiose l' ali spando.

FAR FROM HIS FRIENDS, HE FLIES TO THEM IN THOUGHT.

THE more my own fond wishes would impel
My steps to you, sweet company of friends!
Fortune with their free course the more contends,
And elsewhere bids me roam, by snare and spell
The heart, sent forth by me though it rebel,
Is still with you where that fair vale extends,
In whose green windings most our sea ascends,
From which but yesterday I wept farewell.
It took the right-hand way, the left I tried,
I dragg'd by force in slavery to remain,
It left at liberty with Love its guide;
But patience is great comfort amid pain:
Long habits mutually form'd declare
That our communion must be brief and rare.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CIX.

Amor che nel pensier mio vive e regna.

THE COURAGE AND TIMIDITY OF LOVE.

THE long Love that in my thought I harbòur,
And in my heart doth keep his residence,
Into my face pressèth with bold pretence,
And there campèth displaying his bannèr.
She that me learns to love and to suffèr,
And wills that my trust, and lust's negligence
Be rein'd by reason, shame, and reverence,
With his hardiness takes displeasure.
Wherewith Love to the heart's forest he fleeth,
Leaving his enterprise with pain and cry,
And there him hideth, and not appearèth.
What may I do, when my master fearèth,
But in the field with him to live and die?
For good is the life, ending faithfully. WYATT.

LOVE, that liveth and reigneth in my thought,
That built its seat within my captive breast;

Clad in the arms wherein with me he fought,
Oft in my face he doth his banner rest.
She, that me taught to love, and suffer pain;
My doubtful hope, and eke my hot desire
With shamefaced cloak to shadow and restrain,
Her smiling grace converteth straight to ire.
And coward love then to the heart apace
Taketh his flight; whereas he lurks, and plains
His purpose lost, and dare not show his face.
For my lord's guilt thus faultless bide I pains.
Yet from my lord shall not my foot remove:
Sweet is his death, that takes his end by love. SURREY.

LOVE in my thought who ever lives and reigns,
And in my heart still holds the upper place,
At times come forward boldly in my face,
There plants his ensign and his post maintains:
She, who in love instructs us and its pains,
Would fain that reason, shame, respect should chase
Presumptuous hope and high desire abase,
And at our daring scarce herself restrains,
Love thereon to my heart retires dismay'd,
Abandons his attempt, and weeps and fears,
And hiding there, no more my friend appears.
What can the liege whose lord is thus afraid,
More than with him, till life's last gasp, to dwell?
For who well loving dies at least dies well. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CX.

Come talora al caldo tempo suole.

HE LIKENS HIMSELF TO THE INSECT WHICH, FLYING INTO ONE'S EYES, MEETS ITS DEATH.

As when at times in summer's scorching heats,
Lured by the light, the simple insect flies,
As a charm'd thing, into the passer's eyes,
Whence death the one and pain the other meets,
Thus ever I, my fatal sun to greet,
Rush to those eyes where so much sweetness lies
That reason's guiding hand fierce Love defies,
And by strong will is better judgment beat.
I clearly see they value me but ill,

And, for against their torture fails my strength,
That I am doom'd my life to lose at length:
But Love so dazzles and deludes me still,
My heart their pain and not my loss laments,
And blind, to its own death my soul consents.

MACGREGOR.

SESTINA V.

Alla dolce ombra de le belle frondi.

HE TELLS THE STORY OF HIS LOVE, RESOLVING HENCEFORTH TO DEVOTE HIMSELF TO GOD.

BENEATH the pleasant shade of beauteous leaves
I ran for shelter from a cruel light,
E'en here below that burnt me from high heaven,
When the last snow had ceased upon the hills,
And amorous airs renew'd the sweet spring time,
And on the upland flourish'd herbs and boughs.

Ne'er did the world behold such graceful boughs,
Nor ever wind rustled so verdant leaves,
As were by me beheld in that young time:
So that, though fearful of the ardent light,
I sought not refuge from the shadowing hills,
But of the plant accepted most in heaven.

A laurel then protected from that heaven:
Whence, oft enamour'd with its lovely boughs,
A roamer I have been through woods, o'er hills,
But never found I other trunk, nor leaves
Like these, so honour'd with supernal light,
Which changed not qualities with changing time.

Wherefore each hour more firm, from time to time
Following where I heard my call from heaven,
And guided ever by a soft clear light,
I turn'd, devoted still, to those first boughs,
Or when on earth are scatter'd the sere leaves,
Or when the sun restored makes green the hills.

The woods, the rocks, the fields, the floods, and hills,
All that is made, are conquer'd, changed by time:
And therefore ask I pardon of those leaves,
If, after many years, revolving heaven
Sway'd me to flee from those entangling boughs,
When I begun to see its better light.

So dear to me at first was the sweet light,
That willingly I pass'd o'er difficult hills,
But to be nearer those belovèd boughs;
Now shortening life, the apt place and full time
Show me another path to mount to heaven,
And to make fruit not merely flowers and leaves.

Other love, other leaves, and other light,
Other ascent to heaven by other hills
I seek—in sooth 'tis time—and other boughs. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXI.

Quand' io v' odo parlar sì dolcemente.

TO ONE WHO SPOKE TO HIM OF LAURA.

WHENE'ER you speak of her in that soft tone
Which Love himself his votaries surely taught,
My ardent passion to such fire is wrought,
That e'en the dead reviving warmth might own:
Where'er to me she, dear or kind, was known
There the bright lady is to mind now brought,
In the same bearing which, to waken thought,
Needed no sound but of my sighs alone.
Half-turn'd I see her looking, on the breeze
Her light hair flung; so true her memories roll
On my fond heart of which she keeps the keys;
But the surpassing bliss which floods my soul
So checks my tongue, to tell how, queen-like, there,
She sits as on her throne, I never dare. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXII.

Nè così bello il sol giammai levarsi.

THE CHARMS OF LAURA WHEN SHE FIRST MET HIS SIGHT.

NE'ER can the sun such radiance soft display,
Piercing some cloud that would its light impair;
Ne'er tinged some showery arch the humid air,
With variegated lustre half so gay,
As when, sweet-smiling my fond heart away,
All-beauteous shone my captivating fair;
For charms what mortal can with her compare!
But truth, impartial truth! much more might say.

I saw young Cupid, saw his laughing eyes
With such bewitching, am'rous sweetness roll,
That every human glance I since despise.
Believe, dear friend! I saw the wanton boy;
Bent was his bow to wound my tender soul;
Yet, ah! once more I'd view the dang'rous joy.

ANON. 1777.

SUN never rose so beautiful and bright
When skies above most clear and cloudless show'd,
Nor, after rain, the bow of heaven e'er glow'd
With tints so varied, delicate, and light,
As in rare beauty flash'd upon my sight,
The day I first took up this am'rous load,
That face whose fellow ne'er on earth abode—
Even my praise to paint it seems a slight!
Then saw I Love, who did her fine eyes bend
So sweetly, every other face obscure
Has from that hour till now appear'd to me.
The boy-god and his bow, I saw them, friend,
From whom life since has never been secure,
Whom still I madly yearn again to see. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXIII.

Pommi ove 'l sol occide i fiori e l' erba.

HIS INVINCIBLE CONSTANCY.

PLACE me where herb and flower the sun has dried,
Or where numb winter's grasp holds sterner sway:
Place me where Phœbus sheds a temperate ray,
Where first he glows, where rests at eventide.
Place me in lowly state, in power and pride,
Where lour the skies, or where bland zephyrs play:
Place me where blind night rules, or lengthened day,
In age mature, or in youth's boiling tide:
Place me in heaven, or in the abyss profound,
On lofty height, or in low vale obscure,
A spirit freed, or to the body bound;
Rank'd with the great, or all unknown to fame,
I still the same will be! the same endure!
And my trilustral sighs still breathe the same! DACRE.

PLACE me where Phœbus burns each herb, each flower;
Or where cold snows, and frost o'ercome his rays:
Place me where rolls his car with temp'rate blaze;
In climes that feel not, or that feel his power.
Place me where fortune may look bright, or lour;
Mid murky airs, or where soft zephyr plays:
Place me in night, in long or short-lived days,
Where age makes sad, or youth gilds ev'ry hour:
Place me on mountains high, in vallies drear,
In heaven, on earth, in depths unknown to-day;
Whether life fosters still, or flies this clay:
Place me where fame is distant, where she's near:
Still will I love; nor shall those sighs yet cease,
Which thrice five years have robb'd this breast of peace.

ANON. 1777.

PLACE me where angry Titan burns the Moor,
And thirsty Afric fiery monsters brings,
Or where the new-born phœnix spreads her wings,
And troops of wond'ring birds her flight adore:
Place me by Gange, or Ind's empamper'd shore,
Where smiling heavens on earth cause double springs:
Place me where Neptune's quire of Syrens sings,
Or where, made hoarse through cold, he leaves to roar:
Me place where Fortune doth her darlings crown,
A wonder or a spark in Envy's eye,
Or late outrageous fates upon me frown,
And pity wailing, see disaster'd me,
Affection's print my mind so deep doth prove,
I may forget myself, but not my love.

DRUMMOND.

SONNET CXIV.

O d' ardente virtute ornata e calda.

HE CELEBRATES LAURA'S BEAUTY AND VIRTUE.

O mind, by ardent virtue graced and warm'd,
To whom my pen so oft pours forth my heart;
Mansion of noble probity, who art
A tower of strength 'gainst all assault full arm'd.
O rose effulgent, in whose foldings, charm'd,
We view with fresh carnation snow take part!
O pleasure whence my wing'd ideas start

To that bless'd vision which no eye, unharm'd,
Created, may approach—thy name, if rhyme
Could bear to Bactra and to Thule's coast,
Nile, Tanaïs, and Calpe should resound,
And dread Olympus.—But a narrower bound
Confines my flight: and thee, our native clime
Between the Alps and Apennine must boast. CAPEL LOFFT.

WITH glowing virtue graced, of warm heart known,
Sweet Spirit! for whom so many a page I trace,
Tower in high worth which foundest well thy base!
Centre of honour, perfect, and alone!
O blushes! on fresh snow like roses thrown,
Wherein I read myself and mend apace;
O pleasures! lifting me to that fair face
Brightest of all on which the sun e'er shone.
Oh! if so far its sound may reach, your name
On my fond verse shall travel West and East,
From southern Nile to Thule's utmost bound.
But such full audience since I may not claim,
It shall be heard in that fair land at least
Which Apennine divides, which Alps and seas surround.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXV.

Quando 'l voler, che con duo sproni ardenti.

HER LOOKS BOTH COMFORT AND CHECK HIM.

WHEN, with two ardent spurs and a hard rein,
Passion, my daily life who rules and leads,
From time to time the usual law exceeds
That calm, at least in part, my spirits may gain,
It findeth her who, on my forehead plain,
The dread and daring of my deep heart reads,
And seeth Love, to punish its misdeeds,
Lighten her piercing eyes with worse disdain.
Wherefore—as one who fears the impending blow
Of angry Jove—it back in haste retires,
For great fears ever master great desires;
But the cold fire and shrinking hopes which so
Lodge in my heart, transparent as a glass,
O'er her sweet face at times make gleams of grace to pass.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXVI.

Non Tesin, Po, Varo, Arno, Adige e Tebro.

HE EXTOLS THE LAUREL AND ITS FAVOURITE STREAM.

Not all the streams that water the bright earth,
Not all the trees to which its breast gives birth,
Can cooling drop or healing balm impart
To slack the fire which scorches my sad heart,
As one fair brook which ever weeps with me,
Or, which I praise and sing, as one dear tree.
This only help I find amid Love's strife;
Wherefore it me behoves to live my life
In arms, which else from me too rapid goes.
Thus on fresh shore the lovely laurel grows;
Who planted it, his high and graceful thought
'Neath its sweet shade, to Sorga's murmurs, wrote.

MACGREGOR.

[IMITATION.]

Nor Arne, nor Mincius, nor stately Tiber,
Sebethus, nor the flood into whose streams
He fell who burnt the world with borrow'd beams;
Gold-rolling Tagus, Munda, famous Iber,
Sorgue, Rhone, Loire, Garron, nor proud-bank'd Seine,
Peneus, Phasis, Xanthus, humble Ladon,
Nor she whose nymphs excel her who loved Adon,
Fair Tamesis, nor Ister large, nor Rhine,
Euphrates, Tigris, Indus, Hermus, Gange,
Pearly Hydaspes, serpent-like Meander,—
The gulf bereft sweet Hero her Leander—
Nile, that far, far his hidden head doth range,
Have ever had so rare a cause of praise
As Ora, where this northern Phœnix stays. DRUMMOND.

BALLATA VI.

Di tempo in tempo mi si fa men dura.

THOUGH SHE BE LESS SEVERE, HE IS STILL NOT CONTENTED AND TRANQUIL AT HEART.

From time to time more clemency for me
In that sweet smile and angel form I trace;
Seem too her lovely face
And lustrous eyes at length more kind to be.

Yet, if thus honour'd, wherefore do my sighs
In doubt and sorrow flow,
Signs that too truly show
My anguish'd desperate life to common eyes?
Haply if, where she is, my glance I bend,
This harass'd heart to cheer,
Methinks that Love I hear
Pleading my cause, and see him succour lend.
Not therefore at an end the strife I deem,
Nor in sure rest my heart at last esteem;
For Love most burns within
When Hope most pricks us on the way to win.

MACGREGOR.

FROM time to time less cruelty I trace
In her sweet smile and form divinely fair;
Less clouded doth appear
The heaven of her fine eyes and lovely face.
What then at last avail to me those sighs,
Which from my sorrows flow,
And in my semblance show
The life of anguish and despair I lead?
If towards her perchance I bend mine eyes,
Some solace to bestow
Upon my bosom's woe,
Methinks Love takes my part, and lends me aid:
Yet still I cannot find the conflict stay'd,
Nor tranquil is my heart in every state:
For, ah! my passion's heat
More strongly glows within as my fond hopes increase.

NOTT.

SONNET CXVII.

Che fai, alma? che pensi? avrem mai pace?

DIALOGUE OF THE POET WITH HIS HEART.

P. WHAT actions fire thee, and what musings fill?
Soul! is it peace, or truce, or war eterne?
H. Our lot I know not, but, as I discern,
Her bright eyes favour not our cherish'd ill.
P. What profit, with those eyes if she at will
Makes us in summer freeze, in winter burn?
H. From him, not her, those orbs their movement learn.

P. What's he to us, she sees it and is still.
H. Sometimes, though mute the tongue, the heart laments
Fondly, and, though the face be calm and bright,
Bleeds inly, where no eye beholds its grief.
P. Nathless the mind not thus itself contents,
Breaking the stagnant woes which there unite,
For misery in fine hopes finds no relief. MACGREGOR.

P. WHAT act, what dream, absorbs thee, O my soul?
Say, must we peace, a truce, or warfare hail?
H. Our fate I know not; but her eyes unveil
The grief our woe doth in her heart enrol.
P. But that is vain, since by her eyes' control
With nature I no sympathy inhale.
H. Yet guiltless she, for Love doth there prevail.
P. No balm to me, since she will not condole.
H. When man is mute, how oft the spirit grieves,
In clamorous woe! how oft the sparkling eye
Belies the inward tear, where none can gaze!
P. Yet restless still, the grief the mind conceives
Is not dispell'd, but stagnant seems to lie.
The wretched hope not, though hope aid might raise.
WOLLASTON.

SONNET CXVIII.

Non d' atra e tempestosa onda marina.

HE IS LED BY LOVE TO REASON.

No wearied mariner to port e'er fled
From the dark billow, when some tempest's nigh,
As from tumultuous gloomy thoughts I fly—
Thoughts by the force of goading passion bred:
Nor wrathful glance of heaven so surely sped
Destruction to man's sight, as does that eye
Within whose bright black orb Love's Deity
Sharpens each dart, and tips with gold its head.
Enthroned in radiance there he sits, not blind,
Quiver'd, and naked, or by shame just veil'd,
A live, not fabled boy, with changeful wing;
Thence unto me he lends instruction kind,
And arts of verse from meaner bards conceal'd,
Thus am I taught whate'er of love I write or sing. NOTT.

Ne'er from the black and tempest-troubled brine
The weary mariner fair haven sought,
As shelter I from the dark restless thought
Whereto hot wishes spur me and incline:
Nor mortal vision ever light divine
Dazzled, as mine, in their rare splendour caught
Those matchless orbs, with pride and passion fraught,
Where Love aye haunts his darts to gild and fine.
Him, blind no more, but quiver'd, there I view,
Naked, except so far as shame conceals,
A wingèd boy—no fable—quick and true.
What few perceive he thence to me reveals;
So read I clearly in her eyes' dear light
Whate'er of love I speak, whate'er I write. Macgregor.

SONNET CXIX.

Questa umil fera, un cor di tigre o d' orsa.

HE PRAYS HER EITHER TO WELCOME OR DISMISS HIM AT ONCE.

Fiercer than tiger, savager than bear,
In human guise an angel form appears,
Who between fear and hope, from smiles to tears
So tortures me that doubt becomes despair.
Ere long if she nor welcomes me, nor frees,
But, as her wont, between the two retains,
By the sweet poison circling through my veins,
My life, O Love! will soon be on its lees.
No longer can my virtue, worn and frail
With such severe vicissitudes, contend,
At once which burn and freeze, make red and pale:
By flight it hopes at length its grief to end,
As one who, hourly failing, feels death nigh:
Powerless he is indeed who cannot even die! Macgregor.

SONNET CXX.

Ite, caldi sospiri, al freddo core.

HE IMPLORES MERCY OR DEATH.

Go, my warm sighs, go to that frozen breast,
Burst the firm ice, that charity denies;
And, if a mortal prayer can reach the skies,
Let death or pity give my sorrows rest!

Go, softest thoughts! Be all you know express'd
Of that unnoticed by her lovely eyes,
Though fate and cruelty against me rise,
Error at least and hope shall be repress'd.
Tell her, though fully you can never tell,
That, while her days calm and serenely flow,
In darkness and anxiety I dwell;
Love guides your flight, my thoughts securely go,
Fortune may change, and all may yet be well!
If my sun's aspect not deceives my woe. CHARLEMONT.

Go, burning sighs, to her cold bosom go,
Its circling ice which hinders pity rend,
And if to mortal prayer Heaven e'er attend,
Let death or mercy finish soon my woe.
Go forth, fond thoughts, and to our lady show
The love to which her bright looks never bend,
If still her harshness, or my star offend,
We shall at least our hopeless error know.
Go, in some chosen moment, gently say,
Our state disquieted and dark has been,
Even as hers pacific and serene.
Go, safe at last, for Love escorts your way:
From my sun's face if right the skies I guess
Well may my cruel fortune now be less. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXXI.

Le stelle e 'l cielo e gli elementi a prova.

LAURA'S UNPARALLELED BEAUTY AND VIRTUE.

THE stars, the elements, and Heaven have made
With blended powers a work beyond compare;
All their consenting influence, all their care,
To frame one perfect creature lent their aid.
Whence Nature views her loveliness display'd
With sun-like radiance sublimely fair;
Nor mortal eye can the pure splendour bear:
Love, sweetness, in unmeasured grace array'd.
The very air illumed by her sweet beams
Breathes purest excellence; and such delight,
That all expression far beneath it gleams.
No base desire lives in that heavenly light,

Honour alone and virtue!—fancy's dreams
Never saw passion rise refined by rays so bright."
CAPEL LOFFT.

THE stars, the heaven, the elements, I ween,
Put forth their every art and utmost care
In that bright sight, as fairest Nature fair,
Whose like on earth the sun has nowhere seen;
So noble, elegant, unique her mien,
Scarce mortal glance to rest on it may dare,
Love so much softness and such graces rare
Showers from those dazzling and resistless een.
The atmosphere, pervaded and made pure
By their sweet rays, kindles with goodness so,
Thought cannot equal it nor language show.
Here no ill wish, no base desires endure,
But honour, virtue. Here, if ever yet,
Has lust his death from supreme beauty met. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXXII.

Non fur mai Giove e Cesare sì mossi.

LAURA IN TEARS.

HIGH Jove to thunder ne'er was so intent,
So resolute great Cæsar ne'er to strike,
That pity had not quench'd the ire of both,
And from their hands the accustom'd weapons shook.
Madonna wept: my Lord decreed that I
Should see her then, and there her sorrows hear;
So joy, desire should fill me to the brim,
Thrilling my very marrow and my bones.
Love show'd to me, nay, sculptured on my heart,
That sweet and sparkling tear, and those soft words
Wrote with a diamond on its inmost core,
Where with his constant and ingenious keys
He still returneth often, to draw thence
True tears of mine and long and heavy sighs. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXXIII.

I' vidi in terra angelici costumi.

THE EFFECTS OF HER GRIEF.

ON earth reveal'd the beauties of the skies,
Angelic features, it was mine to hail;

Features, which wake my mingled joy and wail,
While all besides like dreams or shadows flies.
And fill'd with tears I saw those two bright eyes,
Which oft have turn'd the sun with envy pale;
And from those lips I heard—oh! such a tale,
As might awake brute Nature's sympathies!
Wit, pity, excellence, and grief, and love
With blended plaint so sweet a concert made,
As ne'er was given to mortal ear to prove;
And heaven itself such mute attention paid,
That not a breath disturb'd the listening grove—
Even æther's wildest gales the tuneful charm obey'd.

WRANGHAM.

YES, I beheld on earth angelic grace,
And charms divine which mortals rarely see,
Such as both glad and pain the memory;
Vain, light, unreal is all else I trace:
Tears I saw shower'd from those fine eyes apace,
Of which the sun ofttimes might envious be;
Accents I heard sigh'd forth so movingly,
As to stay floods, or mountains to displace.
Love and good sense, firmness, with pity join'd
And wailful grief, a sweeter concert made
Than ever yet was pour'd on human ear:
And heaven unto the music so inclined,
That not a leaf was seen to stir the shade;
Such melody had fraught the winds, the atmosphere.

NOTT.

SONNET CXXIV.

Quel sempre acerbo ed onorato giorno.

HE RECALLS HER AS HE SAW HER WHEN IN TEARS.

THAT ever-painful, ever-honour'd day
So left her living image on my heart
Beyond or lover's wit or poet's art,
That oft to it will doting memory stray.
A gentle pity softening her bright mien,
Her sorrow there so sweet and sad was heard,
Doubt in the gazer's bosom almost stirr'd
Goddess or mortal, which made heaven serene.

Fine gold her hair, her face as sunlit snow,
Her brows and lashes jet, twin stars her eyne,
Whence the young archer oft took fatal aim;
Each loving lip—whence utterance sweet and low
Her pent grief found—a rose which rare pearls line,
Her tears of crystal and her sighs of flame. MACGREGOR.

THAT ever-honour'd, yet too bitter day,
Her image hath so graven in my breast,
That only memory can return it dress'd
In living charms, no genius could portray:
Her air such graceful sadness did display,
Her plaintive, soft laments my ear so bless'd,
I ask'd if mortal, or a heavenly guest,
Did thus the threatening clouds in smiles array.
Her locks were gold, her cheeks were breathing snow,
Her brows with ebon arch'd—bright stars her eyes,
Wherein Love nestled, thence his dart to aim;
Her teeth were pearls—the rose's softest glow
Dwelt on that mouth, whence woke to speech grief's sighs;
Her tears were crystal—and her breath was flame.

WOLLASTON.

SONNET CXXV.

Ove ch' i' posi gli occhi lassi o giri.

HER IMAGE IS EVER IN HIS HEART.

WHERE'ER I rest or turn my weary eyes,
To ease the longings which allure them still,
Love pictures my bright lady at his will,
That ever my desire may verdant rise.
Deep pity she with graceful grief applies—
Warm feelings ever gentle bosoms fill—
While captived equally my fond ears thrill
With her sweet accents and seraphic sighs.
Love and fair Truth were both allied to tell
The charms I saw were in the world alone,
That 'neath the stars their like was never known.
Nor ever words so dear and tender fell
On listening ear; nor tears so pure and bright
From such fine eyes e'er sparkled in the light.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXXVI.

In qual parte del cielo, in quale idea.

HE EXTOLS THE BEAUTY AND VIRTUE OF LAURA.

SAY from what part of heaven 'twas Nature drew,
From what idea, that so perfect mould
To form such features, bidding us behold,
In charms below, what she above could do?
What fountain-nymph, what dryad-maid e'er threw
Upon the wind such tresses of pure gold?
What heart such numerous virtues can unfold?
Although the chiefest all my fond hopes slew.
He for celestial charms may look in vain,
Who has not seen my fair one's radiant eyes,
And felt their glances pleasingly beguile.
How Love can heal his wounds, then wound again,
He only knows, who knows how sweet her sighs,
How sweet her converse, and how sweet her smile. NOTT.

IN what celestial sphere—what realm of thought,
Dwelt the bright model from which Nature drew
That fair and beautous face, in which we view
Her utmost power, on earth, divinely wrought?
What sylvan queen—what nymph by fountain sought,
Upon the breeze such golden tresses threw?
When did such virtues one sole breast imbue?
Though with my death her chief perfection's fraught.
For heavenly beauty he in vain inquires,
Who ne'er beheld her eyes' celestial stain,
Where'er she turns around their brilliant fires:
He knows not how Love wounds, and heals again,
Who knows not how she sweetly smiles, respires
The sweetest sighs, and speaks in sweetest strain! ANON.

SONNET CXXVII.

Amor ed io sì pien di maraviglia.

HER EVERY ACTION IS DIVINE.

As one who sees a thing incredible,
In mutual marvel Love and I combine,
Confessing, when she speaks or smiles divine,
None but herself can be her parallel.

Where the fine arches of that fair brow swell
So sparkle forth those twin true stars of mine,
Than whom no safer brighter beacons shine
His course to guide who'd wisely love and well.
What miracle is this, when, as a flower,
She sits on the rich grass, or to her breast,
Snow-white and soft, some fresh green shrub is press'd:
And oh! how sweet, in sóme fair April hour,
To see her pass, alone, in pure thought there,
Weaving fresh garlands in her own bright hair.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXXVIII.

O passi sparsi, o pensier vaghi e pronti.

EVERY CIRCUMSTANCE OF HIS PASSION IS A TORMENT TO HIM.

O SCATTER'D steps! O vague and busy thoughts!
O firm-set memory! O fierce desire!
O passion powerful! O failing heart!
O eyes of mine, not eyes, but fountains now!
O leaf, which honourest illustrious brows,
Sole sign of double valour, and best crown!
O painful life, O error oft and sweet!
That make me search the lone plains and hard hills.
O beauteous face! where Love together placed
The spurs and curb, to strive with which is vain,
They prick and turn me so at his sole will.
O gentle amorous souls, if such there be!
And you, O naked spirits of mere dust,
Tarry and see how great my suffering is! MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXXIX.

Lieti fiori e felici, e ben nate erbe.

HE ENVIES EVERY SPOT THAT SHE FREQUENTS.

GAY, joyous blooms, and herbage glad with showers,
O'er which my pensive fair is wont to stray!
Thou plain, that listest her melodious lay,
As her fair feet imprint thy waste of flowers!
Ye shrubs so trim; ye green, unfolding bowers;
Ye violets clad in amorous, pale array;

Thou shadowy grove, gilded by beauty's ray
Whose top made proud majestically towers!
O pleasant country! O translucent stream,
Bathing her lovely face, her eyes so clear,
And catching of their living light the beam!
I envy ye her actions chaste and dear:
No rock shall stud thy waters, but shall learn
Henceforth with passion strong as mine to burn. NOTT.

O BRIGHT and happy flowers and herbage blest,
On which my lady treads!—O favour'd plain,
That hears her accents sweet, and can retain
The traces by her fairy steps impress'd!—
Pure shrubs, with tender verdure newly dress'd,—
Pale amorous violets,—leafy woods, whose reign
Thy sun's bright rays transpierce, and thus sustain
Your lofty stature, and umbrageous crest;—
O thou, fair country, and thou, crystal stream,
Which bathes her countenance and sparkling eyes,
Stealing fresh lustre from their living beam;
How do I envy thee these precious ties!
Thy rocky shores will soon be taught to gleam
With the same flame that burns in all my sighs.

WROTTESLEY.

SONNET CXXX.

Amor, che vedi ogni pensiero aperto.

HE CARES NOT FOR SUFFERINGS, SO THAT HE DISPLEASE NOT LAURA.

LOVE, thou who seest each secret thought display'd,
And the sad steps I take, with thee sole guide;
This throbbing breast, to thee thrown open wide,
To others' prying barr'd, thine eyes pervade.
Thou know'st what efforts, following thee, I made,
While still from height to height thy pinions glide;
Nor deign'st one pitying look to turn aside
On him who, fainting, treads a trackless glade.
I mark from far the mildly-beaming ray
To which thou goad'st me through the devious maze;
Alas! I want thy wings, to speed my way—
Henceforth, a distant homager, I'll gaze,
Content by silent longings to decay,
So that my sighs for her in her no anger raise.

WRANGHAM.

O Love, that seest my heart without disguise,
And those hard toils from thee which I sustain,
Look to my inmost thought; behold the pain
To thee unveil'd, hid from all other eyes.
Thou know'st for thee this breast what suffering tries;
Me still from day to day o'er hill and plain
Thou chasest; heedless still, while I complain
As to my wearied steps new thorns arise.
True, I discern far off the cheering light
To which, through trackless wilds, thou urgest me;
But wings like thine to bear me to delight
I want:—Yet from these pangs I would not flee,
Finding this only favour in her sight,
That not displeased my love and death she see.

Capel Lofft.

SONNET CXXXI.

Or che 'l ciel e la terra e 'l vento tace.

NIGHT BRINGS PEACE TO ALL SAVE HIM.

O'er earth and sky her lone watch silence keeps,
And bird and beast in stirless slumber lie,
Her starry chariot Night conducts on high,
And in its bed the waveless ocean sleeps.
I wake, muse, burn, and weep; of all my pain
The one sweet cause appears before me still;
War is my lot, which grief and anger fill,
And thinking but of her some rest I gain.
Thus from one bright and living fountain flows
The bitter and the sweet on which I feed;
One hand alone can harm me or can heal:
And thus my martyrdom no limit knows,
A thousand deaths and lives each day I feel,
So distant are the paths to peace which lead. Macgregor.

'Tis now the hour when midnight silence reigns
O'er earth and sea, and whispering Zephyr dies
Within his rocky cell; and Morpheus chains
Each beast that roams the wood, and bird that wings the skies.

More blest those rangers of the earth and air,
Whom night awhile relieves from toil and pain;
Condemn'd to tears and sighs, and wasting care,
To me the circling sun descends in vain!
Ah me! that mingling miseries and joys,
Too near allied, from one sad fountain flow!
The magic hand that comforts and annoys
Can hope, and fell despair, and life, and death bestow!
Too great the bliss to find in death relief:
Fate has not yet fill'd up the measure of my grief.

WOODHOUSELEE.

SONNET CXXXII.

Come 'l candido piè per l' erba fresca.

HER WALK, LOOKS, WORDS, AND AIR.

As o'er the fresh grass her fair form its sweet
And graceful passage makes at evening hours,
Seems as around the newly-wakening flowers
Found virtue issue from her delicate feet.
Love, which in true hearts only has his seat,
Nor elsewhere deigns to prove his certain powers,
So warm a pleasure from her bright eyes showers,
No other bliss I ask, no better meat.
And with her soft look and light step agree
Her mild and modest, never eager air,
And sweetest words in constant union rare.
From these four sparks—nor only these we see—
Springs the great fire wherein I live and burn,
Which makes me from the sun as night-birds turn.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXXXIII.

S' io fossi stato fermo alla spelunca.

TO ONE WHO DESIRED LATIN VERSE OF HIM.

STILL had I sojourn'd in that Delphic cave
Where young Apollo prophet first became,
Verona, Mantua were not sole in fame,
But Florence, too, her poet now might have:
But since the waters of that spring no more
Enrich my land, needs must that I pursue

Some other planet, and, with sickle new,
Reap from my field of sticks and thorns its store.
Dried is the olive: elsewhere turn'd the stream
Whose source from famed Parnassus was derived,
Whereby of yore it throve in best esteem.
Me fortune thus, or fault perchance, deprived
Of all good fruit—unless eternal Jove
Shower on my head some favour from above. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXXXIV.

Quando Amor i begli occhi a terra inchina.

LAURA SINGS.

If Love her beauteous eyes to earth incline,
And all her soul concentring in a sigh,
Then breathe it in her voice of melody,
Floating clear, soft, angelical, divine;
My heart, forth-stolen so gently, I resign,
And, all my hopes and wishes changed, I cry,—
"Oh, may my last breath pass thus blissfully,
If Heaven so sweet a death for me design!"
But the rapt sense, by such enchantment bound,
And the strong will, thus listening to possess
Heaven's joys on earth, my spirit's flight delay.
And thus I live; and thus drawn out and wound
Is my life's thread, in dreamy blessedness,
By this sole syren from the realms of day. DACRE.

Her bright and love-lit eyes on earth she bends—
Concentres her rich breath in one full sigh—
A brief pause—a fond hush—her voice on high,
Clear, soft, angelical, divine, ascends.
Such rapine sweet through all my heart extends,
New thoughts and wishes so within me vie,
Perforce I say,—"Thus be it mine to die,
If Heaven to me so fair a doom intends!"
But, ah! those sounds whose sweetness laps my sense,
The strong desire of more that in me yearns,
Restrain my spirit in its parting hence.
Thus at her will I live; thus winds and turns
The yarn of life which to my lot is given,
Earth's single siren, sent to us from heaven. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXXXV.

Amor mi manda quel dolce pensero.

LIFE WILL FAIL HIM BEFORE HOPE.

Love to my mind recalling that sweet thought,
The ancient confidant our lives between,
Well comforts me, and says I ne'er have been
So near as now to what I hoped and sought.
I, who at times with dangerous falsehood fraught,
At times with partial truth, his words have seen,
Live in suspense, still missing the just mean,
'Twixt yea and nay a constant battle fought.
Meanwhile the years pass on: and I behold
In my true glass the adverse time draw near
Her promise and my hope which limits here.
So let it be: alone I grow not old;
Changes not e'en with age my loving troth;
My fear is this—the short life left us both. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXXXVI.

Pien d' un vago pensier, che me desvia.

HIS TONGUE IS TIED BY EXCESS OF PASSION.

Such vain thought as wonted to mislead me
In desert hope, by well-assurèd moan,
Makes me from company to live alone,
In following her whom reason bids me flee.
She fleeth as fast by gentle cruelty;
And after her my heart would fain be gone,
But armèd sighs my way do stop anon,
'Twixt hope and dread locking my liberty;
Yet as I guess, under disdainful brow
One beam of ruth is in her cloudy look:
Which comforteth the mind, that erst for fear shook:
And therewithal bolded I seek the way how
To utter the smart I suffer within;
But such it is, I not how to begin. WYATT

Full of a tender thought, which severs me
From all my kind, a lonely musing thing,
From my breast's solitude I sometimes spring,
Still seeking her whom most I ought to flee;
And see her pass though soft, so adverse she,

That my soul spreads for flight a trembling wing:
Of armèd sighs such legions does she bring,
The fair antagonist of Love and me.
Yet from beneath that dark disdainful brow,
Or much I err, one beam of pity flows,
Soothing with partial warmth my heart's distress:
Again my bosom feels its wonted glow!
But when my simple hope I would disclose,
My o'er-fraught faltering tongue the crowded thoughts oppress. WRANGHAM.

SONNET CXXXVII.

Più volte già dal bel sembiante umano.

LOVE UNMANS HIS RESOLUTION.

OFT as her angel face compassion wore,
With tears whose eloquence scarce fails to move,
With bland and courteous speech, I boldly strove
To soothe my foe, and in meek guise implore:
But soon her eyes inspire vain hopes no more;
For all my fortune, all my fate in love,
My life, my death, the good, the ills I prove,
To her are trusted by one sovereign power.
Hence 'tis, whene'er my lips would silence break,
Scarce can I hear the accents which I vent,
By passion render'd spiritless and weak.
Ah! now I find that fondness to excess
Fetters the tongue, and overpowers intent:
Faint is the flame that language can express! NOTT.

OFT have I meant my passion to declare,
When fancy read compliance in her eyes;
And oft with courteous speech, with love-lorn sighs,
Have wish'd to soften my obdurate fair:
But let that face one look of anger wear,
The intention fades; for all that fate supplies,
Or good, or ill, all, all that I can prize,
My life, my death, Love trusts to her dear care.
E'en I can scarcely hear my amorous moan,
So much my voice by passion is confined;
So faint, so timid are my accents grown!

Ah! now the force of love I plainly see;
What can the tongue, or what the impassion'd mind?
He that could speak his love, ne'er loved like me.

ANON. 1777.

SONNET CXXXVIII.

Giunto m' ha Amor fra belle e crude braccia.

HE CANNOT END HER CRUELTY, NOR SHE HIS HOPE.

ME Love has left in fair cold arms to lie,
Which kill me wrongfully: if I complain,
My martyrdom is doubled, worse my pain:
Better in silence love, and loving die!
For she the frozen Rhine with burning eye
Can melt at will, the hard rock break in twain,
So equal to her beauty her disdain
That others' pleasure wakes her angry sigh.
A breathing moving marble all the rest,
Of very adamant is made her heart,
So hard, to move it baffles all my art.
Despite her lowering brow and haughty breast,
One thing she cannot, my fond heart deter
From tender hopes and passionate sighs for her.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXXXIX.

O Invidia, nemica di virtute.

ENVY MAY DISTURB, BUT CANNOT DESTROY HIS HOPE.

O DEADLY Envy, virtue's constant foe,
With good and lovely eager to contest!
Stealthily, by what way, in that fair breast
Hast entrance found? by what arts changed it so?
Thence by the roots my weal hast thou uptorn,
Too blest in love hast shown me to that fair
Who welcomed once my chaste and humble prayer,
But seems to treat me now with hate and scorn.
But though you may by acts severe and ill
Sigh at my good and smile at my distress,
You cannot change for me a single thought.
Not though a thousand times each day she kill

Can I or hope in her or love her less,
For though she scare, Love confidence has taught.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXL.

Mirando 'l sol de' begli occhi sereno.

THE SWEETS AND BITTERS OF LOVE.

MARKING of those bright eyes the sun serene
Where reigneth Love, who mine obscures and grieves,
My hopeless heart the weary spirit leaves
Once more to gain its paradise terrene;
Then, finding full of bitter-sweet the scene,
And in the world how vast the web it weaves,
A secret sigh for baffled love it heaves,
Whose spurs so sharp, whose curb so hard have been.
By these two contrary and mix'd extremes,
With frozen or with fiery wishes fraught,
To stand 'tween misery and bliss she seems:
Seldom in glad and oft in gloomy thought,
But mostly contrite for its bold emprize,
For of like seed like fruit must ever rise! MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXLI.

Fera stella (se 'l cielo ha forza in noi).

TO PINE FOR HER IS BETTER THAN TO ENJOY HAPPINESS WITH ANY OTHER.

ILL-OMEN'D was that star's malignant gleam
That ruled my hapless birth; and dim the morn
That darted on my infant eyes the beam;
And harsh the wail, that told a man was born;
And hard the sterile earth, which first was worn
Beneath my infant feet; but harder far,
And harsher still, the tyrant maid, whose scorn,
In league with savage Love, inflamed the war
Of all my passions.—Love himself more tame,
With pity soothes my ills; while that cold heart,
Insensible to the devouring flame
Which wastes my vitals, triumphs in my smart.
One thought is comfort—that her scorn to bear,
Excels e'en prosperous love, with other earthly fair.
WOODHOUSELEE.

An evil star usher'd my natal morn
(If heaven have o'er us power, as some have said),
Hard was the cradle where I lay when born,
And hard the earth where first my young feet play'd;
Cruel the lady who, with eyes of scorn
And fatal bow, whose mark I still was made,
Dealt me the wound, O Love, which since I mourn
Whose cure thou only, with those arms, canst aid.
But, ah! to thee my torments pleasure bring:
She, too, severer would have wished the blow,
A spear-head thrust, and not an arrow-sting.
One comfort rests—better to suffer so
For her, than others to enjoy: and I,
Sworn on thy golden dart, on this for death rely.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXLII.

Quando mi vene innanzi il tempo e 'l loco.

RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY LOVE.

The time and scene where I a slave became
When I remember, and the knot so dear
Which Love's own hand so firmly fasten'd here,
Which made my bitter sweet, my grief a game;
My heart, with fuel stored, is, as a flame
Of those soft sighs familiar to mine ear,
So lit within, its very sufferings cheer;
On these I live, and other aid disclaim.
That sun, alone which beameth for my sight,
With his strong rays my ruin'd bosom burns
Now in the eve of life as in its prime,
And from afar so gives me warmth and light,
Fresh and entire, at every hour, returns
On memory the knot, the scene, the time. MACGREGOR

SONNET CXLIII.

Per mezzo i boschi inospiti e selvaggi.

EVER THINKING ON HER, HE PASSES FEARLESS AND SAFE THROUGH THE FOREST OF ARDENNES.

Through woods inhospitable, wild, I rove,
Where armèd travellers bend their fearful way;

Nor danger dread, save from that sun of love,
Bright sun! which darts a soul-enflaming ray.
Of her I sing, all-thoughtless as I stray,
Whose sweet idea strong as heaven's shall prove:
And oft methinks these pines, these beeches, move
Like nymphs; 'mid which fond fancy sees her play
I seem to hear her, when the whispering gale
Steals through some thick-wove branch, when sings a bird,
When purls the stream along yon verdant vale.
How grateful might this darksome wood appear,
Where horror reigns, where scarce a sound is heard;
But, ah! 'tis far from all my heart holds dear. ANON. 1777.

AMID the wild wood's lone and difficult ways,
Where travel at great risk e'en men in arms,
I pass secure—for only me alarms
That sun, which darts of living love the rays—
Singing fond thoughts in simple lays to her
Whom time and space so little hide from me;
E'en here her form, nor hers alone, I see,
But maids and matrons in each beech and fir:
Methinks I hear her when the bird's soft moan,
The sighing leaves I hear, or through the dell
Where its bright lapse some murmuring rill pursues.
Rarely of shadowing wood the silence lone,
The solitary horror pleased so well,
Except that of my sun too much I lose. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXLIV.

Mille piagge in un giorno e mille rivi.

TO BE NEAR HER RECOMPENSES HIM FOR ALL THE PERILS OF THE WAY.

LOVE, who his votary wings in heart and feet,
To the third heaven that lightly he may soar,
In one short day has many a stream and shore
Given to me, in famed Ardennes, to meet.
Unarm'd and single to have pass'd is sweet
Where war in earnest strikes, nor tells before—
A helmless, sail-less ship 'mid ocean's roar—
My breast with dark and fearful thoughts replete;
But reach'd my dangerous journey's far extreme,
Remembering whence I came, and with whose wings,

From too great courage conscious terror springs.
But this fair country and belovèd stream
With smiling welcome reassures my heart,
Where dwells its sole light ready to depart. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXLV.

Amor mi sprona in un tempo ed affrena.

HE HEARS THE VOICE OF REASON, BUT CANNOT OBEY.

LOVE in one instant spurs me and restrains,
Assures and frightens, freezes me and burns,
Smiles now and scowls, now summons me and spurns,
In hope now holds me, plunges now in pains:
Now high, now low, my weary heart he hurls,
Until fond passion loses quite the path,
And highest pleasure seems to stir but wrath—
My harass'd mind on such strange errors feeds!
A friendly thought there points the proper track,
Not of such grief as from the full eye breaks,
To go where soon it hopes to be at ease,
But, as if greater power thence turn'd it back,
Despite itself, another way it takes,
And to its own slow death and mine agrees. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXLVI.

Geri, quando talor meco s' adira.

HE APPEASES HER BY HUMILITY, AND EXHORTS A FRIEND TO DO LIKEWISE.

WHEN my sweet foe, so haughty oft and high,
Moved my brief ire no more my sight can thole,
One comfort is vouchsafed me lest I die,
Through whose sole strength survives my harass'd soul;
Where'er her eyes—all light which would deny
To my sad life—in scorn or anger roll,
Mine with such true humility reply,
Soon their meek glances all her rage control.
Were it not so, methinks I less could brook
To gaze on hers than on Medúsa's mien,
Which turn'd to marble all who met her look.
My friend, act thus with thine, for closed I ween
All other aid, and nothing flight avails
Against the wings on which our master sails. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXLVII.

Po, ben puo' tu portartene la scorza.

TO THE RIVER PO, ON QUITTING LAURA.

THOU Po to distant realms this frame mayst bear,
On thy all-powerful, thy impetuous tide;
But the free spirit that within doth bide
Nor for thy might, nor any might doth care:
Not varying here its course, nor shifting there,
Upon the favouring gale it joys to glide;
Plying its wings toward the laurel's pride,
In spite of sails or oars, of sea or air.
Monarch of floods, magnificent and strong,
That meet'st the sun as he leads on the day,
But in the west dost quit a fairer light;
Thy curvèd course this body wafts along;
My spirit on Love's pinions speeds its way,
And to its darling home directs its flight! NOTT.

Po, thou upon thy strong and rapid tide
This frame corporeal mayst onward bear:
But a free spirit is concealèd there,
Which nor thy power nor any power can guide.
That spirit, light on breeze auspicious buoy'd,
With course unvarying backward cleaves the air—
Nor wave, nor wind, nor sail, nor oar its care—
And plies its wings, and seeks the laurel's pride.
'Tis thine, proud king of rivers, eastward borne
To meet the sun, as he leads on the day;
And from a brighter west 'tis thine to turn:
Thy hornèd flood these passive limbs obey—
But, uncontrollèd, to its sweet sojourn
On Love's untiring plumes my spirit speeds its way.
WRANGHAM.

SONNET CXLVIII.

Amor fra l' erbe una leggiadra rete.

HE COMPARES HIMSELF TO A BIRD CAUGHT IN A NET.

LOVE 'mid the grass beneath a laurel green—
The plant divine which long my flame has fed,
Whose shade for me less bright than sad is seen—
A cunning net of gold and pearls had spread:

Its bait the seed he sows and reaps, I ween
Bitter and sweet, which I desire, yet dread:
Gentle and soft his call, as ne'er has been
Since first on Adam's eyes the day was shed:
And the bright light which disenthrones the sun
Was flashing round, and in her hand, more fair
Than snow or ivory, was the master rope.
So fell I in the snare; their slave so won
Her speech angelical and winning air,
Pleasure, and fond desire, and sanguine hope. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXLIX.

Amor che 'ncende 'l cor d' ardente zelo.

LOVE AND JEALOUSY.

'Tis Love's caprice to freeze the bosom now
With bolts of ice, with shafts of flame now burn;
And which his lighter pang, I scarce discern—
Or hope or fear, or whelming fire or snow.
In heat I shiver, and in cold I glow,
Now thrill'd with love, with jealousy now torn:
As if her thin robe by a rival worn,
Or veil, had screen'd him from my vengeful blow.
But more 'tis mine to burn by night, by day;
And how I love the death by which I die,
Nor thought can grasp, nor tongue of bard can sing:
Not so my freezing fire—impartially
She shines to all; and who would speed his way
To that high beam, in vain expands his fluttering wing.
WRANGHAM.

Love with hot zeal now burns the heart within,
Now holds it fetter'd with a frozen fear,
Leaving it doubtful to our judgment here
If hope or dread, if flame or frost, shall win.
In June I shiver, burn December in,
Full of desires, from jealousy ne'er clear;
E'en as a lady who her loving fee
Hides 'neath a little veil of texture thin.
Of the two ills the first is all mine own,
By day, by night to burn; how sweet that pain
Dwells not in thought, nor ever poet sings:
Not so the other, my fair flame, is shown;

She levels all: who hopes the crest to gain
Of that proud light expands in vain his wings. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CL.

Se 'l dolce sguardo di costei m' ancide.

HE IS CONTINUALLY IN FEAR OF DISPLEASING HER.

IF thus the dear glance of my lady slay,
On her sweet sprightly speech if dangers wait,
If o'er me Love usurp a power so great,
Oft as she speaks, or when her sun-smiles play;
Alas! what were it if she put away,
Or for my fault, or by my luckless fate,
Her eyes from pity, and to death's full hate,
Which now she keeps aloof, should then betray.
Thus if at heart with terror I am cold,
When o'er her fair face doubtful shadows spring,
The feeling has its source in sufferings old.
Woman by nature is a fickle thing,
And female hearts—time makes the proverb sure—
Can never long one state of love endure. MACGREGOR.

IF the soft glance, the speech, both kind and wise,
Of that belovèd one can wound me so,
And if, whene'er she lets her accents flow,
Or even smiles, Love gains such victories;
Alas! what should I do, were those dear eyes,
Which now secure my life through weal and woe,
From fault of mine, or evil fortune, slow
To shed on me their light in pity's guise?
And if my trembling spirit groweth cold
Whene'er I see change to her aspect spring,
This fear is only born of trials old;
(Woman by nature is a fickle thing,)
And hence I know her heart hath power to hold
But a brief space Love's sweet imagining! WROTTESLEY.

SONNET CLI.

Amor, Natura, e la bell' alma umile.

DURING A SERIOUS ILLNESS OF LAURA.

LOVE, Nature, Laura's gentle self combines,
She where each lofty virtue dwells and reigns,

Against my peace: To pierce with mortal pains
Love toils—such ever are his stern designs.
Nature by bonds so slight to earth confines
Her slender form, a breath may break its chains;
And she, so much her heart the world disdains,
Longer to tread life's wearying round repines.
Hence still in her sweet frame we view decay
All that to earth can joy and radiance lend,
Or serve as mirror to this laggard age;
And Death's dread purpose should not Pity stay,
Too well I see where all those hopes must end,
With which I fondly soothed my lingering pilgrimage.
WRANGHAM.

LOVE, Nature, and that gentle soul as bright,
Where every lofty virtue dwells and reigns,
Are sworn against my peace. As wont, Love strains
His every power that I may perish quite.
Nature her delicate form by bonds so slight
Holds in existence, that no help sustains;
She is so modest that she now disdains
Longer to brook this vile life's painful fight.
Thus fades and fails the spirit day by day,
Which on those dear and lovely limbs should wait,
Our mirror of true grace which wont to give:
And soon, if Mercy turn not Death away,
Alas! too well I see in what sad state
Are those vain hopes wherein I loved to live. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLII.

Questa Fenice dell' aurata piuma.

HE COMPARES HER TO THE PHŒNIX.

THIS wondrous Phœnix with the golden plumes
Forms without art so rare a ring to deck
That beautiful and soft and snowy neck,
That every heart it melts, and mine consumes:
Forms, too, a natural diadem which lights
The air around, whence Love with silent steel
Draws liquid subtle fire, which still I feel

Fierce burning me though sharpest winter bites;
Border'd with azure, a rich purple vest,
Sprinkled with roses, veils her shoulders fair:
Rare garment hers, as grace unique, alone!
Fame, in the opulent and odorous breast
Of Arab mountains, buries her sole lair,
Who in our heaven so high a pitch has flown. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLIII.

Se Virgilio ed Omero avessin visto.

THE MOST FAMOUS POETS OF ANTIQUITY WOULD HAVE SUNG HER ONLY, HAD THEY SEEN HER.

HAD tuneful Maro seen, and Homer old,
The living sun which here mine eyes behold,
The best powers they had join'd of either lyre,
Sweetness and strength, that fame she might acquire;
Unsung had been, with vex'd Æneas, then
Achilles and Ulysses, godlike men,
And for nigh sixty years who ruled so well
The world; and who before Ægysthus fell;
Nay, that old flower of virtues and of arms,
As this new flower of chastity and charms,
A rival star, had scarce such radiance flung.
In rugged verse him honour'd Ennius sung,
I her in mine. Grant, Heaven! on my poor lays
She frown not, nor disdain my humble praise. ANON.

SONNET CLIV.

Giunto Alessandro alla famosa tomba.

HE FEARS THAT HE IS INCAPABLE OF WORTHILY CELEBRATING HER.

THE son of Philip, when he saw the tomb
Of fierce Achilles, with a sigh, thus said:
"O happy, whose achievements erst found room
From that illustrious trumpet to be spread
O'er earth for ever!"—But, beyond the gloom
Of deep Oblivion shall that loveliest maid,
Whose like to view seems not of earthly doom,
By my imperfect accents be convey'd?

Her of the Homeric, the Orphèan Lyre,
Most worthy, or that shepherd, Mantua's pride,
To be the theme of their immortal lays;
Her stars and unpropitious fate denied
This palm:—and me bade to such height aspire,
Who, haply, dim her glories by my praise. CAPEL LOFFT.

WHEN Alexander at the famous tomb
Of fierce Achilles stood, the ambitious sigh
Burst from his bosom—"Fortunate! on whom
Th' eternal bard shower'd honours bright and high."
But, ah! for so to each is fix'd his doom,
This pure fair dove, whose like by mortal eye
Was never seen, what poor and scanty room
For her great praise can my weak verse supply?
Whom, worthiest Homer's line and Orpheus' song,
Or his whom reverent Mantua still admires—
Sole and sufficient she to wake such lyres!
An adverse star, a fate here only wrong,
Entrusts to one who worships her dear name,
Yet haply injures by his praise her fame. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLV.

Almo Sol, quella fronde ch' io sola amo.

TO THE SUN, WHOSE SETTING HID LAURA'S DWELLING FROM HIS VIEW.

O BLESSED Sun! that sole sweet leaf I love,
First loved by thee, in its fair seat, alone,
Bloometh without a peer, since from above
To Adam first our shining ill was shown.
Pause we to look on her! Although to stay
Thy course I pray thee, yet thy beams retire;
Their shades the mountains fling, and parting day
Parts me from all I most on earth desire.
The shadows from yon gentle heights that fall,
Where sparkles my sweet fire, where brightly grew
That stately laurel from a sucker small,
Increasing, as I speak, hide from my view
The beauteous landscape and the blessèd scene,
Where dwells my true heart with its only queen.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLVI.

Passa la nave mia colma d' oblio.

UNDER THE FIGURE OF A TEMPEST-TOSSED VESSEL, HE DESCRIBES HIS OWN SAD STATE.

My bark, deep laden with oblivion, rides
O'er boisterous waves, through winter's midnight gloom,
'Twixt Scylla and Charybdis, while, in room
Of pilot, Love, mine enemy, presides;
At every oar a guilty fancy bides,
Holding at nought the tempest and the tomb;
A moist eternal wind the sails consume,
Of sighs, of hopes, and of desire besides.
A shower of tears, a fog of chill disdain
Bathes and relaxes the o'er-wearied cords,
With error and with ignorance entwined;
My two loved lights their wonted aid restrain;
Reason or Art, storm-quell'd, no help affords,
Nor hope remains the wish'd-for port to find. CHARLEMONT.

My lethe-freighted bark with reckless prore
Cleaves the rough sea 'neath wintry midnight skies,
My old foe at the helm our compass eyes,
With Scylla and Charybdis on each shore,
A prompt and daring thought at every oar,
Which equally the storm and death defies,
While a perpetual humid wind of sighs,
Of hopes, and of desires, its light sail tore.
Bathe and relax its worn and weary shrouds
(Which ignorance with error intertwines),
Torrents of tears, of scorn and anger clouds;
Hidden the twin dear lights which were my signs;
Reason and Art amid the waves lie dead,
And hope of gaining port is almost fled. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLVII.

Una candida cerva sopra l' erba.

THE VISION OF THE FAWN.

Beneath a laurel, two fair streams between,
At early sunrise of the opening year,
A milk-white fawn upon the meadow green,
Of gold its either horn, I saw appear;

So mild, yet so majestic, was its mien,
I left, to follow, all my labours here,
As miners after treasure, in the keen
Desire of new, forget the old to fear.
"Let none impede"—so, round its fair neck, run
The words in diamond and topaz writ—
"My lord to give me liberty sees fit."
And now the sun his noontide height had won
When I, with weary though unsated view,
Fell in the stream—and so my vision flew. MACGREGOR.

A FORM I saw with secret awe, nor ken I what it warns;
Pure as the snow, a gentle doe it seem'd, with silver horns:
Erect she stood, close by a wood, between two running streams; [dreams!
And brightly shone the morning sun upon that land of
The pictured hind fancy design'd glowing with love and hope; [lope;
Graceful she stepp'd, but distant kept, like the timid ante-
Playful, yet coy, with secret joy her image fill'd my soul;
And o'er the sense soft influence of sweet oblivion stole.
Gold I beheld and emerald on the collar that she wore;
Words, too—but theirs were characters of legendary lore.
"Cæsar's decree hath made me free; and through his solemn charge, [large."
Untouch'd by men o'er hill and glen I wander here at
The sun had now, with radiant brow, climb'd his meridian throne,
Yet still mine eye untiringly gazed on that lovely one.
A voice was heard—quick disappear'd my dream—the spell was broken.
Then came distress: to the consciousness of life I had awoken. FATHER PROUT.

SONNET CLVIII.

Siccome eterna vita è veder Dio.

ALL HIS HAPPINESS IS IN GAZING UPON HER.

As life eternal is with God to be,
No void left craving, there of all possess'd,
So, lady mine, to be with you makes blest,
This brief frail span of mortal life to me.
So fair as now ne'er yet was mine to see—

If truth from eyes to heart be well express'd—
Lovely and blessèd spirit of my breast,
Which levels all high hopes and wishes free.
Nor would I more demand if less of haste
She show'd to part; for if, as legends tell
And credence find, are some who live by smell,
On water some, or fire who touch and taste,
All, things which neither strength nor sweetness give,
Why should not I upon your dear sight live? MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLIX.

Stiamo, Amor, a veder la gloria nostra.

TO LOVE, ON LAURA WALKING ABROAD.

HERE stand we, Love, our glory to behold—
How, passing Nature, lovely, high, and rare!
Behold! what showers of sweetness falling there!
What floods of light by heaven to earth unroll'd!
How shine her robes, in purple, pearls, and gold,
So richly wrought, with skill beyond compare!
How glance her feet!—her beaming eyes how fair
Through the dark cloister which these hills enfold!
The verdant turf, and flowers of thousand hues
Beneath yon oak's old canopy of state,
Spring round her feet to pay their amorous duty.
The heavens, in joyful reverence, cannot choose
But light up all their fires, to celebrate
Her praise, whose presence charms their awful beauty.
MERIVALE.

HERE tarry, Love, our glory to behold;
Nought in creation so sublime we trace;
Ah! see what sweetness showers upon that face,
Heaven's brightness to this earth those eyes unfold!
See, with what magic art, pearls, purple, gold,
That form transcendant, unexampled, grace:
Beneath the shadowing hills observe her pace,
Her glance replete with elegance untold!
The verdant turf, and flowers of every hue,
Clustering beneath yon aged holm-oak's gloom,
For the sweet pressure of her fair feet sue;
The orbs of fire that stud yon beauteous sky,
Cheer'd by her presence and her smiles, assume
Superior lustre and serenity. NOTT.

SONNET CLX.

Pasco la mente d' un sì nobil cibo.

TO SEE AND HEAR HER IS HIS GREATEST BLISS.

I FEED my fancy on such noble food,
That Jove I envy not his godlike meal;
I see her—joy invades me like a flood,
And lethe of all other bliss I feel;
I hear her—instantly that music rare
Bids from my captive heart the fond sigh flow;
Borne by the hand of Love I know not where,
A double pleasure in one draught I know.
Even in heaven that dear voice pleaseth well,
So winning are its words, its sound so sweet,
None can conceive, save who had heard, their spell;
Thus, in the same small space, visibly, meet
All charms of eye and ear wherewith our race
Art, Genius, Nature, Heaven have join'd to grace.

MACGREGOR.

SUCH noble aliment sustains my soul,
That Jove I envy not his godlike food;
I gaze on her—and feel each other good
Engulph'd in that blest draught at Lethe's bowl:
Her every word I in my heart enrol,
That on its grief it still may constant brood;
Prostrate by Love—my doom not understood
From that one form, I feel a twin control.
My spirit drinks the music of her voice,
Whose speaking harmony (to heaven so dear)
They only feel who in its tone partake:
Again within her face my eyes rejoice,
For in its gentle lineaments appear
What Genius, Nature, Art, and Heaven can wake.

WOLLASTON.

SONNET CLXI.

L' aura gentil che rasserena i poggi.

JOURNEYING TO VISIT LAURA, HE FEELS RENEWED ARDOUR AS HE APPROACHES.

THE gale, that o'er yon hills flings softer blue,
And wakes to life each bud that gems the glade,

I know; its breathings such impression made,
Wafting me fame, but wafting sorrow too:
My wearied soul to soothe, I bid adieu
To those dear Tuscan haunts I first survey'd;
And, to dispel the gloom around me spread,
I seek this day my cheering sun to view,
Whose sweet attraction is so strong, so great,
That Love again compels me to its light;
Then he so dazzles me, that vain were flight.
Not arms to brave, 'tis wings to 'scape, my fate
I ask; but by those beams I'm doom'd to die,
When distant which consume, and which enflame when nigh.

NOTT.

THE gentle air, which brightens each green hill,
Wakening the flowers that paint this bowery glade,
I recognise it by its soft breath still,
My sorrow and renown which long has made:
Again where erst my sick heart shelter sought,
From my dear native Tuscan air I flee:
That light may cheer my dark and troubled thought,
I seek my sun, and hope to-day to see.
That sun so great and genial sweetness brings,
That Love compels me to his beams again,
Which then so dazzle me that flight is vain:
I ask for my escape not arms, but wings:
Heaven by this light condemns me sure to die,
Which from afar consumes, and burns when nigh.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXII.

Di dì in dì vo cangiando il viso e 'l pelo.

HIS WOUNDS CAN BE HEALED ONLY BY PITY OR DEATH.

I ALTER day by day in hair and mien,
Yet shun not the old dangerous baits and dear,
Nor sever from the laurel, limed and green,
Which nor the scorching sun, nor fierce cold sear.
Dry shall the sea, the sky be starless seen,
Ere I shall cease to covet and to fear
Her lovely shadow, and—which ill I screen—
To like, yet loathe, the deep wound cherish'd here:

For never hope I respite from my pain,
From bones and nerves and flesh till I am free;
Unless mine enemy some pity deign,
Till things impossible accomplish'd be,
None but herself or death the blow can heal
Which Love from her bright eyes has left my heart to feel.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXIII.

L' aura serena che fra verdi fronde.

THE GENTLE BREEZE (L' AURA) RECALLS TO HIM THE TIME WHEN HE FIRST SAW HER.

THE gentle gale, that plays my face around,
Murmuring sweet mischief through the verdant grove,
To fond remembrance brings the time, when Love
First gave his deep, although delightful wound;
Gave me to view that beauteous face, ne'er found
Veil'd, as disdain or jealousy might move;
To view her locks that shone bright gold above,
Then loose, but now with pearls and jewels bound:
Those locks she sweetly scatter'd to the wind,
And then coil'd up again so gracefully,
That but to think on it still thrills the sense.
These Time has in more sober braids confined;
And bound my heart with such a powerful tie,
That death alone can disengage it thence. NOTT.

THE balmy airs that from yon leafy spray
My fever'd brow with playful murmurs greet,
Recall to my fond heart the fatal day
When Love his first wound dealt, so deep yet sweet,
And gave me the fair face—in scorn away
Since turn'd, or hid by jealousy—to meet;
The locks, which pearls and gems now oft array,
Whose shining tints with finest gold compete,
So sweetly on the wind were then display'd,
Or gather'd in with such a graceful art,
Their very thought with passion thrills my mind.
Time since has twined them in more sober braid,
And with a snare so powerful bound my heart,
Death from its fetters only can unbind. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXIV.

L' aura celeste che 'n quel verde Lauro.

HER HAIR AND EYES.

The heavenly airs from yon green laurel roll'd,
Where Love to Phœbus whilom dealt his stroke,
Where on my neck was placed so sweet a yoke,
That freedom thence I hope not to behold,
O'er me prevail, as o'er that Arab old
Medusa, when she changed him to an oak;
Nor ever can the fairy knot be broke
Whose light outshines the sun, not merely gold;
I mean of those bright locks the curlèd snare
Which folds and fastens with so sweet a grace
My soul, whose humbleness defends alone.
Her mere shade freezes with a cold despair
My heart, and tinges with pale fear my face;
And oh! her eyes have power to make me stone.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXV.

L' aura soave ch' al sol spiega e vibra.

HIS HEART LIES TANGLED IN HER HAIR.

THE pleasant gale, that to the sun unplaits
And spreads the gold Love's fingers weave, and braid
O'er her fine eyes, and all around her head,
Fetters my heart, the wishful sigh creates:
No nerve but thrills, no artery but beats,
Approaching my fair arbiter with dread,
Who in her doubtful scale hath ofttimes weigh'd
Whether or death or life on me awaits;
Beholding, too, those eyes their fires display,
And on those shoulders shine such wreaths of hair,
Whose witching tangles my poor heart ensnare.
But how this magic's wrought I cannot say;
For twofold radiance doth my reason blind,
And sweetness to excess palls and o'erpowers my mind.

NOTT.

THE soft gale to the sun which shakes and spreads
The gold which Love's own hand has spun and wrought,

There, with her bright eyes and those fairy threads,
Binds my poor heart and sifts each idle thought.
My veins of blood, my bones of marrow fail,
Thrills all my frame when I, to hear or gaze,
Draw near to her, who oft, in balance frail,
My life and death together holds and weighs,
And see those love-fires shine wherein I burn,
And, as its snow each sweetest shoulder heaves,
Flash the fair tresses right and left by turn;
Verse fails to paint what fancy scarce conceives.
From two such lights is intellect distress'd,
And by such sweetness weary and oppress'd. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXVI.

O bella man, che mi distringi 'l core.

THE STOLEN GLOVE.

O BEAUTEOUS hand! that dost my heart subdue,
And in a little space my life confine;
Hand where their skill and utmost efforts join
Nature and Heaven, their plastic powers to show!
Sweet fingers, seeming pearls of orient hue,
To my wounds only cruel, fingers fine!
Love, who towards me kindness doth design,
For once permits ye naked to our view.
Thou glove most dear, most elegant and white,
Encasing ivory tinted with the rose;
More precious covering ne'er met mortal sight.
Would I such portion of thy veil had gain'd!
O fleeting gifts which fortune's hand bestows!
'Tis justice to restore what theft alone obtain'd. NOTT.

O BEAUTEOUS hand! which robb'st me of my heart,
And holdest all my life in little space;
Hand! which their utmost effort and best art
Nature and Heaven alike have join'd to grace;
O sister pearls of orient hue, ye fine
And fairy fingers! to my wounds alone
Cruel and cold, does Love awhile incline
In my behalf, that naked ye are shown?
O glove! most snowy, delicate, and dear,
Which spotless ivory and fresh roses set,

Where can on earth a sweeter spoil be met,
Unless her fair veil thus reward us here?
Inconstancy of human things! the theft
Late won and dearly prized too soon from me is reft!

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXVII.

Non pur quell' una bella ignuda mano.

HE RETURNS THE GLOVE, BEWAILING THE EFFECT OF HER BEAUTY.

NOT of one dear hand only I complain,
Which hides it, to my loss, again from view,
But its fair fellow and her soft arms too
Are prompt my meek and passive heart to pain.
Love spreads a thousand toils, nor one in vain,
Amid the many charms, bright, pure, and new,
That so her high and heavenly part endue,
No style can equal it, no mind attain.
That starry forehead and those tranquil eyes,
The fair angelic mouth, where pearl and rose
Contrast each other, whence rich music flows,
These fill the gazer with a fond surprise,
The fine head, the bright tresses which defied
The sun to match them in his noonday pride. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXVIII.

Mia ventura ed Amor m' avean sì adorno.

HE REGRETS HAVING RETURNED HER GLOVE.

ME Love and Fortune then supremely bless'd!
Her glove which gold and silken broidery bore!
I seem'd to reach of utmost bliss the crest,
Musing within myself on her who wore.
Ne'er on that day I think, of days the best,
Which made me rich, then beggar'd as before,
But rage and sorrow fill mine aching breast,
With slighted love and self-shame boiling o'er;
That on my precious prize in time of need
I kept not hold, nor made a firmer stand
'Gainst what at best was merely angel force,
That my feet were not wings their flight to speed,
And so at last take vengeance on the hand,
Make my poor eyes of tears the too oft source.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXIX.

D' un bel, chiaro, polito e vivo ghiaccio.

THOUGH RACKED BY AGONY, HE DOES NOT COMPLAIN OF HER.

THE flames that ever on my bosom prey
From living ice or cold fair marble pour,
And so exhaust my veins and waste my core,
Almost insensibly I melt away.
Death, his stern arm already rear'd to slay,
As thunders angry heaven or lions roar,
Pursues my life that vainly flies before,
While I with terror shake, and mute obey.
And yet, were Love and Pity friends, they might
A double column for my succour throw
Between my worn soul and the mortal blow:
It may not be; such feelings in the sight
Of my loved foe and mistress never stir;
The fault is in my fortune, not in her. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXX.

Lasso, ch' i' ardo, ed altri non mel crede!

POSTERITY WILL ACCORD TO HIM THE PITY WHICH LAURA REFUSES.

ALAS, with ardour past belief I glow!
None doubt this truth, except one only fair,
Who all excels, for whom alone I care;
She plainly sees, yet disbelieves my woe.
O rich in charms, but poor in faith! canst thou
Look in these eyes, nor read my whole heart there?
Were I not fated by my baleful star,
For me from pity's fount might favour flow.
My flame, of which thou tak'st so little heed,
And thy high praises pour'd through all my song,
O'er many a breast may future influence spread:
These, my sweet fair, so warns prophetic thought,
Closed thy bright eye, and mute thy poet's tongue,
E'en after death shall still with sparks be fraught. NOTT.

ALAS! I burn, yet credence fail to gain:
All others credit it save only she
All others who excels, alone for me;
She seems to doubt it still, yet sees it plain.

Infinite beauty, little faith and slow,
Perceive ye not my whole heart in mine eyes?
Well might I hope, save for my hostile skies,
From mercy's fount some pitying balm to flow.
Yet this my flame which scarcely moves your care,
And your warm praises sung in these fond rhymes,
May thousands yet inflame in after times;
These I foresee in fancy, my sweet fair,
Though your bright eyes be closed and cold my breath,
Shall lighten other loves and live in death. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXXI.

Anima, che diverse cose tante.

HE REJOICES AT BEING ON EARTH WITH HER, AS HE IS THEREBY ENABLED BETTER TO IMITATE HER VIRTUES.

SOUL! with such various faculties endued
To think, write, speak, to read, to see, to hear;
My doting eyes! and thou, my faithful ear!
Where drinks my heart her counsels wise and good;
Your fortune smiles; if after or before,
The path were won so badly follow'd yet,
Ye had not then her bright eyes' lustre met,
Nor traced her light feet earth's green carpet o'er.
Now with so clear a light, so sure a sign,
'Twere shame to err or halt on the brief way
Which makes thee worthy of a home divine.
That better course, my weary will, essay!
To pierce the cloud of her sweet scorn be thine,
Pursuing her pure steps and heavenly ray. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXXII.

Dolci ire, dolci sdegni e dolci paci.

HE CONSOLES HIMSELF WITH THE THOUGHT THAT HE WILL BE ENVIED BY POSTERITY.

SWEET scorn, sweet anger, and sweet misery,
Forgiveness sweet, sweet burden, and sweet ill;
Sweet accents that mine ear so sweetly thrill,
That sweetly bland, now sweetly fierce can be.

Mourn not, my soul, but suffer silently;
And those embitter'd sweets thy cup that fill
With the sweet honour blend of loving still
Her whom I told: "Thou only pleasest me."
Hereafter, moved with envy, some may say:
"For that high-boasted beauty of his day
Enough the bard has borne!" then heave a sigh.
Others: "Oh! why, most hostile Fortune, why
Could not these eyes that lovely form survey?
Why was she early born, or wherefore late was I?"

NOTT

SWEET anger, sweet disdain, and peace as sweet,
Sweet ill, sweet pain, sweet burthen that I bear,
Sweet speech as sweetly heard; sweet speech, my fair!
That now enflames my soul, now cools its heat.
Patient, my soul! endure the wrongs you meet;
And all th' embitter'd sweets you're doomed to share
Blend with that sweetest bliss, the maid to greet
In these soft words, "Thou only art my care!"
Haply some youth shall sighing envious say,
"Enough has borne the bard so fond, so true,
For that bright beauty, brightest of his day!"
While others cry, "Sad eyes! how hard your fate,
Why could I ne'er this matchless beauty view?
Why was she born so soon, or I so late?" ANON. 1777

CANZONE XIX.

S' il dissi mai, ch' i' venga in odio a quella.

HE VEHEMENTLY REBUTS THE CHARGE OF LOVING ANOTHER.

PERDIE! I said it not,
Nor never thought to do:
As well as I, ye wot
I have no power thereto.
And if I did, the lot
That first did me enchain
May never slake the knot,
But strait it to my pain.

And if I did, each thing
That may do harm or woe,

Continually may wring
My heart, where so I go!
Report may always ring
Of shame on me for aye,
If in my heart did spring
The words that you do say.

And if I did, each star
That is in heaven above,
May frown on me, to mar
The hope I have in love!
And if I did, such war
As they brought unto Troy,
Bring all my life afar
From all his lust and joy!

And if I did so say,
The beauty that me bound
Increase from day to day,
More cruel to my wound!
With all the moan that may
To plaint may turn my song;
My life may soon decay,
Without redress, by wrong!

If I be clear from thought,
Why do you then complain?
Then is this thing but sought
To turn my heart to pain.
Then this that you have wrought,
You must it now redress;
Of right, therefore, you ought
Such rigour to repress.

And as I have deserved,
So grant me now my hire;
You know I never swerved,
You never found me liar.
For Rachel have I served,
For Leah cared I never;
And her I have reserved
Within my heart for ever.

WYATT.

If I said so, may I be hated by
Her on whose love I live, without which I should die:
If I said so, my days be sad and short,
May my false soul some vile dominion court.
If I said so, may every star to me
Be hostile; round me grow
Pale fear and jealousy;
And she, my foe,
As cruel still and cold as fair she aye must be.

If I said so, may Love upon my heart
Expend his golden shafts, on her the leaden dart;
Be heaven and earth, and God and man my foe,
And she still more severe if I said so:
If I said so, may he whose blind lights lead
Me straightway to my grave,
Trample yet worse his slave,
Nor she behave
Gentle and kind to me in look, or word, or deed.

If I said so, then through my brief life may
All that is hateful block my worthless weary way:
If I said so, may the proud frost in thee
Grow prouder as more fierce the fire in me:
If I said so, no more then may the warm
Sun or bright moon be view'd,
Nor maid, nor matron's form,
But one dread storm
Such as proud Pharaoh saw when Israel he pursued.

If I said so, despite each contrite sigh,
Let courtesy for me and kindly feeling die:
If I said so, that voice to anger swell,
Which was so sweet when first her slave I fell:
If I said so, I should offend whom I,
E'en from my earliest breath
Until my day of death,
Would gladly take,
Alone in cloister'd cell my single saint to make.

But if I said not so, may she who first,
In life's green youth, my heart to hope so sweetly nursed,
Deign yet once more my weary bark to guide
With native kindness o'er the troublous tide;

And graceful, grateful, as her wont before,
When, for I could no more,
My all, myself I gave,
To be her slave,
Forget not the deep faith with which I still adore.

I did not, could not, never would say so,
For all that gold can give, cities or courts bestow:
Let truth, then, take her old proud seat on high,
And low on earth let baffled falsehood lie.
Thou know'st me, Love! if aught my state within
Belief or care may win,
Tell her that I would call
Him blest o'er all
Who, doom'd like me to pine, dies ere his strife begin.

Rachel I sought, not Leah, to secure,
Nor could I this vain life with other fair endure,
And, should from earth Heaven summon her again,
Myself would gladly die
For her, or with her, when
Elijah's fiery car her pure soul wafts on high. MACGREGOR.

CANZONE XX.

Ben mi credea passar mio tempo omai.

HE CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT SEEING HER, BUT WOULD NOT DIE THAT HE MAY STILL LOVE HER.

As pass'd the years which I have left behind,
To pass my future years I fondly thought,
Amid old studies, with desires the same;
But, from my lady since I fail to find
The accustom'd aid, the work himself has wrought
Let Love regard my tempter who became;
Yet scarce I feel the shame
That, at my age, he makes me thus a thief
Of that bewitching light
For which my life is steep'd in careless grief;
In youth I better might
Have ta'en the part which now I needs must take,
For less dishonour boyish errors make.

Those sweet eyes whence alone my life had health
Were ever of their high and heavenly charms
So kind to me when first my thrall begun,
That, as a man whom not his proper wealth,
But some extern yet secret succour arms,
I lived, with them at ease, offending none:
Me now their glances shun
As one injurious and importunate,
Who, poor and hungry, did
Myself the very act, in better state
Which I, in others, chid.
From mercy thus if envy bar me, be
My amorous thirst and helplessness my plea.

In divers ways how often have I tried
If, reft of these, aught mortal could retain
E'en for a single day in life my frame:
But, ah! my soul, which has no rest beside,
Speeds back to those angelic lights again;
And I, though but of wax, turn to their flame,
Planting my mind's best aim
Where less the watch o'er what I love is sure:
As birds i' th' wild wood green,
Where less they fear, will sooner take the lure,
So on her lovely mien,
Now one and now another look I turn,
Wherewith at once I nourish me and burn.

Strange sustenance! upon my death I feed,
And live in flames, a salamander rare!
And yet no marvel, as from love it flows.
A blithe lamb 'mid the harass'd fleecy breed,
Whilom I lay, whom now to worst despair
Fortune and Love, as is their wont, expose.
Winter with cold and snows,
With violets and roses spring is rife,
And thus if I obtain
Some few poor aliments of else weak life,
Who can of theft complain?
So rich a fair should be content with this,
Though others live on hers, if nought she miss.

Who knows not what I am and still have been,
From the first day I saw those beauteous eyes,
Which alter'd of my life the natural mood?
Traverse all lands, explore each sea between,
Who can acquire all human qualities?
There some on odours live by Ind's vast flood;
Here light and fire are food
My frail and famish'd spirit to appease!
Love! more or nought bestow;
With lordly state low thrift but ill agrees;
Thou hast thy darts and bow,
Take with thy hands my not unwilling breath,
Life were well closed with honourable death.

Pent flames are strongest, and, if left to swell,
Not long by any means can rest unknown,
This own I, Love, and at your hands was taught.
When I thus silent burn'd, you knew it well;
Now e'en to me my cries are weary grown,
Annoy to far and near so long that wrought.
O false world! O vain thought!
O my hard fate! where now to follow thee?
Ah! from what meteor light
Sprung in my heart the constant hope which she,
Who, armour'd with your might,
Drags me to death, binds o'er it as a chain?
Yours is the fault, though mine the loss and pain.

Thus bear I of true love the pains along,
Asking forgiveness of another's debt,
And for mine own; whose eyes should rather shun
That too great light, and to the siren's song
My ears be closed: though scarce can I regret
That so sweet poison should my heart o'errun.
Yet would that all were done,
That who the first wound gave my last would deal;
For, if I right divine,
It were best mercy soon my fate to seal;
Since not a chance is mine
That he may treat me better than before,
'Tis well to die if death shut sorrow's door.

J.T. Willmore

AVIGNON.

My song! with fearless feet
The field I keep, for death in flight were shame.
Myself I needs must blame
For these laments; tears, sighs, and death to meet,
Such fate for her is sweet.
Own, slave of Love, whose eyes these rhymes may catch,
Earth has no good that with my grief can match.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXXIII.

Rapido fiume che d' alpestra vena.

JOURNEYING ALONG THE RHONE TO AVIGNON, PETRARCH BIDS THE RIVER KISS LAURA'S HAND, AS IT WILL ARRIVE AT HER DWELLING BEFORE HIM.

IMPETUOUS flood, that from the Alps' rude head,
Eating around thee, dost thy name obtain;*
Anxious like me both night and day to gain
Where thee pure nature, and me love doth lead;
Pour on: thy course nor sleep nor toils impede;
Yet, ere thou pay'st thy tribute to the main,
Oh, tarry where most verdant looks the plain,
Where most serenity the skies doth spread!
There beams my radiant sun of cheering ray,
Which deck thy left banks, and gems o'er with flowers;
E'en now, vain thought! perhaps she chides my stay:
Kiss then her feet, her hand so beauteous fair;
In place of language let thy kiss declare
Strong is my will, though feeble are my powers. NOTT.

O rapid flood! which from thy mountain bed
Gnawest thy shores, whence (in my tongue) thy name;*
Thou art my partner, night and day the same,
Where I by love, thou art by nature led:
Precede me now; no weariness doth shed
Its spell o'er thee, no sleep thy course can tame;
Yet ere the ocean waves thy tribute claim,
Pause, where the herb and air seem brighter fed.
There beams our sun of life, whose genial ray
With brighter verdure thy left shore adorns;
Perchance (vain hope!) e'en now my stay she mourns.
Kiss then her foot, her lovely hand, and may
Thy kiss to her in place of language speak,
The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. WOLLASTON.

* Deriving it from *rodere*, to gnaw.

SONNET CLXXIV.

I dolci colli ov' io lasciai me stesso.

HE LEAVES VAUCLUSE, BUT HIS SPIRIT REMAINS THERE WITH LAURA.

THE loved hills where I left myself behind,
Whence ever 'twas so hard my steps to tear,
Before me rise; at each remove I bear
The dear load to my lot by Love consign'd.
Often I wonder inly in my mind,
That still the fair yoke holds me, which despair
Would vainly break, that yet I breathe this air;
Though long the chain, its links but closer bind.
And as a stag, sore struck by hunter's dart,
Whose poison'd iron rankles in his breast,
Flies and more grieves the more the chase is press'd,
So I, with Love's keen arrow in my heart,
Endure at once my death and my delight,
Rack'd with long grief, and weary with vain flight.

MACGREGOR.

THOSE gentle hills which hold my spirit still
(For though I fly, my heart there must remain),
Are e'er before me, whilst my burthen's pain,
By love bestow'd, I bear with patient will.
I marvel oft that I can yet fulfil
That yoke's sweet duties, which my soul enchain;
I seek release, but find the effort vain;
The more I fly, the nearer seems my ill.
So, like the stag, who, wounded by the dart,
Its poison'd iron rankling in his side,
Flies swifter at each quickening anguish'd throb,—
I feel the fatal arrow at my heart;
Yet with its poison, joy awakes its tide;
My flight exhausts me—grief my life doth rob!

WOLLASTON.

SONNET CLXXV.

Non dall' Ispano Ibero all' Indo Idaspe.

HIS WOES ARE UNEXAMPLED.

FROM Spanish Ebro to Hydaspes old,
Exploring ocean in its every nook,

From the Red Sea to the cold Caspian shore,
In earth, in heaven one only Phœnix dwells.
What fortunate, or what disastrous bird
Omen'd my fate? which Parca winds my yarn,
That I alone find Pity deaf as asp,
And wretched live who happy hoped to be?
Let me not speak of her, but him her guide,
Who all her heart with love and sweetness fills—
Gifts which, from him o'erflowing, follow her,
Who, that my sweets may sour and cruel be,
Dissembleth, careth not, or will not see
That silver'd, ere my time, these temples are. MACGREGOR

SONNET CLXXVI.

Voglia mi sprona; Amor mi guida e scorge.

HE DESCRIBES HIS STATE, SPECIFYING THE DATE OF HIS ATTACHMENT.

PASSION impels me, Love escorts and leads,
Pleasure attracts me, habits old enchain,
Hope with its flatteries comforts me again,
And, at my harass'd heart, with fond touch pleads.
Poor wretch! it trusts her still, and little heeds
The blind and faithless leader of our train;
Reason is dead, the senses only reign:
One fond desire another still succeeds.
Virtue and honour, beauty, courtesy,
With winning words and many a graceful way,
My heart entangled in that laurel sweet.
In thirteen hundred seven and twenty, I
—'Twas April, the first hour, on its sixth day—
Enter'd Love's labyrinth, whence is no retreat.
MACGREGOR.

BY will impell'd, Love o'er my path presides;
By Pleasure led, o'ercome by Habit's reign,
Sweet Hope deludes, and comforts me again;
At her bright touch, my heart's despair subsides:
It takes her proffer'd hand, and there confides.
To doubt its blind disloyal guide were vain;
Each sense usurps poor Reason's broken rein;
On each desire, another wilder rides!
Grace, virtue, honour, beauty, words so dear,
Have twined me with that laurell'd bough, whose power

My heart hath tangled in its lab'rinth sweet:
The thirteen hundred twenty-seventh year,
The sixth of April's suns—in that first hour
My entrance mark'd, whence I see no retreat. WOLLASTON.

SONNET CLXXVII.

Beato in sogno, e di languir contento.

THOUGH SO LONG LOVE'S FAITHFUL SERVANT, HIS ONLY REWARD HAS BEEN TEARS.

HAPPY in visions, and content to pine,
Shadows to clasp, to chase the summer gale,
On shoreless and unfathom'd sea to sail,
To build on sand, and in the air design,
The sun to gaze on till these eyes of mine
Abash'd before his noonday splendour fail,
To chase adown some soft and sloping vale,
The wingèd stag with maim'd and heavy kine;
Weary and blind, save my own harm to all,
Which day and night I seek with throbbing heart,
On Love, on Laura, and on Death I call.
Thus twenty years of long and cruel smart,
In tears and sighs I've pass'd, because I took
Under ill stars, alas! both bait and hook. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXXVIII.

Grazie ch' a pochi 'l ciel largo destina.

THE ENCHANTMENTS THAT ENTHRALL HIM.

GRACES, that liberal Heaven on few bestows;
Rare excellence, scarce known to human kind;
With youth's bright locks age's ripe judgment join'd;
Celestial charms, which a meek mortal shows;
An elegance unmatch'd; and lips, whence flows
Music that can the sense in fetters bind;
A goddess step; a lovely ardent mind,
That breaks the stubborn, and the haughty bows;
Eyes, whose refulgence petrifies the heart,
To glooms, to shades that can a light impart,
Lift high the lover's soul, or plunge it low;
Speech link'd by tenderness and dignity;
With many a sweetly-interrupted sigh;
Such are the witcheries that transform me so. NOTT.

Graces which liberal Heaven grants few to share:
Rare virtue seldom witness'd by mankind;
Experienced judgment with fair hair combined;
High heavenly beauty in a humble fair;
A gracefulness most excellent and rare;
A voice whose music sinks into the mind;
An angel gait; wit glowing and refined,
The hard to break, the high and haughty tear,
And brilliant eyes which turn the heart to stone,
Strong to enlighten hell and night, and take
Souls from our bodies and their own to make;
A speech where genius high yet gentle shone,
Evermore broken by the balmiest sighs
—Such magic spells transform'd me in this wise.

Macgregor.

SESTINA VI.

Anzi tre dì creata era alma in parte.

THE HISTORY OF HIS LOVE; AND PRAYER FOR HELP.

Life's three first stages train'd my soul in part
To place its care on objects high and new,
And to disparage what men often prize,
But, left alone, and of her fatal course
As yet uncertain, frolicsome, and free,
She enter'd at spring-time a lovely wood.

A tender flower there was, born in that wood
The day before, whose root was in a part
High and impervious e'en to spirit free;
For many snares were there of forms so new,
And such desire impell'd my sanguine course,
That to lose freedom were to gain a prize,

Dear, sweet, yet perilous and painful prize!
Which quickly drew me to that verdant wood,
Doom'd to mislead me midway in life's course;
The world I since have ransack'd part by part,
For rhymes, or stones, or sap of simples new,
Which yet might give me back the spirit free.

But ah! I feel my body must be free
From that hard knot which is its richest prize,

Ere medicine old or incantations new
Can heal the wounds which pierced me in that wood,
Thorny and troublous, where I play'd such part,
Leaving it halt who enter'd with hot course.

Yes! full of snares and sticks, a difficult course
Have I to run, where easy-foot and sure
Were rather needed, healthy in each part;
Thou, Lord, who still of pity hast the prize,
Stretch to me thy right hand in this wild wood,
And let thy sun dispel my darkness new.

Look on my state, amid temptations new,
Which, interrupting my life's tranquil course,
Have made me denizen of darkling wood;
If good, restore me, fetterless and free,
My wand'ring consort, and be thine the prize
If yet with thee I find her in blest part.

Lo! thus in part I put my questions new,
If mine be any prize, or run its course,
Be my soul free, or captived in close wood. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXXIX.

In nobil sangue vita umile e queta.

SHE UNITES IN HERSELF THE HIGHEST EXCELLENCES OF VIRTUE AND BEAUTY.

HIGH birth in humble life, reserved yet kind,
On youth's gay flower ripe fruits of age and rare,
A virtuous heart, therewith a lofty mind,
A happy spirit in a pensive air;
Her planet, nay, heaven's king, has fitly shrined
All gifts and graces in this lady fair,
True honour, purest praises, worth refined,
Above what rapt dreams of best poets are.
Virtue and Love so rich in her unite,
With natural beauty dignified address,
Gestures that still a silent grace express,
And in her eyes I know not what strange light,
That makes the noonday dark, the dusk night clear,
Bitter the sweet, and e'en sad absence dear. MACGREGOR.

THOUGH nobly born, so humbly calm she dwells,
So bright her intellect—so pure her mind—
The blossom and its bloom in her we find;
With pensive look, her heart with mirth rebels:
Thus by her planets' union she excels,
(Nay—His, the stars' proud sov'reign, who enshrined
There honour, worth, and fortitude combined!)
Which to the bard inspired, his hope dispels.
Love blooms in her, but 'tis his home most pure;
Her daily virtues blend with native grace;
Her noiseless movements speak, though she is mute:
Such power her eyes, they can the day obscure,
Illume the night,—the honey's sweetness chase,
And wake its stream, where gall doth oft pollute.

WOLLASTON.

SONNET CLXXX.

Tutto 'l dì piango; e poi la notte, quando.

HER CRUELTY RENDERS LIFE WORSE THAN DEATH TO HIM.

THROUGH the long lingering day, estranged from rest,
My sorrows flow unceasing; doubly flow,
Painful prerogative of lover's woe!
In that still hour, when slumber soothes th' unblest.
With such deep anguish is my heart opprest,
So stream mine eyes with tears! Of things below
Most miserable I; for Cupid's bow
Has banish'd quiet from this heaving breast.
Ah me! while thus in suffering morn to morn
And eve to eve succeeds, of death I view
(So should this life be named) one-half gone by—
Yet this I weep not, but another's scorn;
That she, my friend, so tender and so true,
Sould see me hopeless burn, and yet her aid deny.

WRANGHAM.

SONNET CLXXXI.

Già desiai con sì giusta querela.

HE LIVES DESTITUTE OF ALL HOPE SAVE THAT OF RENDERING HER IMMORTAL.

EREWHILE I labour'd with complaint so true,
And in such fervid rhymes to make me heard,

Seem'd as at last some spark of pity stirr'd
In the hard heart which frost in summer knew.
Th' unfriendly cloud, whose cold veil o'er it grew,
Broke at the first breath of mine ardent word,
Or low'ring still she others' blame incurr'd
Her bright and killing eyes who thus withdrew.
No ruth for self I crave, for her no hate;
I wish not this—*that* passes power of mine:
Such was mine evil star and cruel fate.
But I shall ever sing her charms divine,
That, when I have resign'd this mortal breath,
The world may know how sweet to me was death.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET. CLXXXII.

Tra quantunque leggiadre donne e belle.

ALL NATURE WOULD BE IN DARKNESS WERE SHE, ITS SUN, TO PERISH.

WHERE'ER she moves, whatever dames among,
Beauteous or graceful, matchless she below.
With her fair face she makes all others show
Dim, as the day's bright orb night's starry-throng.
And Love still whispers, with prophetic tongue,—
"Long as on earth is seen that glittering brow,
Shall life have charms: but she shall cease to glow
And with her all my power shall fleet along.
Should Nature from the skies their twin-lights wrest;
Hush every breeze, each herb and flower destroy;
Strip man of reason—speech; from Ocean's breast
His tides, his tenants chase—such, earth's annoy;
Yea, still more darken'd were it and unblest,
Had she, thy Laura, closed her eyes to love and joy."

WRANGHAM.

WHENE'ER amidst the damsels, blooming bright,
She shows herself, whose like was never made,
At her approach all other beauties fade,
As at morn's orient glow the gems of night.
Love seems to whisper,—"While to mortal sight
Her graces shall on earth be yet display'd,
Life shall be blest; 'till soon with her decay'd,
The virtues, and my reign shall sink outright."

Of moon and sun, should nature rob the sky,
The air of winds, the earth of herbs and leaves,
Mankind of speech and intellectual eye,
The ocean's bed of fish, and dancing waves;
Even so shall all things dark and lonely lye,
When of her beauty Death the world bereaves!

CHARLEMONT.

SONNET CLXXXIII.

Il cantar novo e 'l pianger degli augelli.

MORNING.

THE birds' sweet wail, their renovated song,
At break of morn, make all the vales resound;
With lapse of crystal waters pouring round,
In clear, swift runnels, the fresh shores among.
She, whose pure passion knows nor guile nor wrong,
With front of snow, with golden tresses crown'd,
Combing her aged husband's hoar locks found,
Wakes me when sportful wakes the warbling throng.
Thus, roused from sleep, I greet the dawning day,
And its succeeding sun, with one more bright,
Still dazzling, as in early youth, my sight:
Both suns I 've seen at once uplift their ray;
This drives the radiance of the stars away,
But that which gilds my life eclipses e'en his light. NOTT.

SOON as gay morn ascends her purple car,
The plaintive warblings of the new-waked grove,
The murmuring streams, through flowery meads that rove,
Fill with sweet melody the valleys fair.
Aurora, famed for constancy in love,
Whose face with snow, whose locks with gold compare,
Smoothing her aged husband's silvery hair,
Bids me the joys of rural music prove.
Then, waking, I salute the sun of day;
But chief that beauteous sun, whose cheering ray
Once gilt, nay gilds e'en now, life's scene so bright.
Dear suns! which oft I 've seen together rise;
This dims each meaner lustre of the skies,
And that sweet sun I love dims every light. ANON. 1777.

SONNET CLXXXIV.

Onde tolse Amor l' oro e di qual vena.

THE CHARMS OF HER COUNTENANCE AND VOICE.

WHENCE could Love take the gold, and from what vein,
To form those bright twin locks? What thorn could grow
Those roses? And what mead that white bestow
Of the fresh dews, which pulse and breath obtain?
Whence came those pearls that modestly restrain
Accents which courteous, sweet, and rare can flow?
And whence those charms that so divinely show,
Spread o'er a face serene as heaven's blue plain?
Taught by what angel, or what tuneful sphere,
Was that celestial song, which doth dispense
Such potent magic to the ravish'd ear?
What sun illumed those bright commanding eyes,
Which now look peaceful, now in hostile guise;
Now torture me with hope, and now with fear? NOTT.

SAY, from what vein did Love procure the gold
To make those sunny tresses? From what thorn
Stole he the rose, and whence the dew of morn,
Bidding them breathe and live in Beauty's mould?
What depth of ocean gave the pearls that told
Those gentle accents sweet, though rarely born?
Whence came so many graces to adorn
That brow more fair than summer skies unfold?
Oh! say what angels lead, what spheres control
The song divine which wastes my life away?
(Who can with trifles now my senses move?)
What sun gave birth unto the lofty soul
Of those enchanting eyes, whose glances stray
To burn and freeze my heart—the sport of Love?

WROTTESLEY.

SONNET CLXXXV.

Qual mio destin, qual forza o qual inganno.

THOUGH HER EYES DESTROY HIM, HE CANNOT TEAR HIMSELF AWAY.

WHAT destiny of mine, what fraud or force,
Unarm'd again conducts me to the field,
Where never came I but with shame to yield
'Scape I or fall, which better is or worse?

—Not worse, but better; from so sweet a source
Shine in my heart those lights, so bright reveal'd
The fatal fire, e'en now as then, which seal'd
My doom, though twenty years have roll'd their course.
I feel death's messengers when those dear eyes,
Dazzling me from afar, I see appear,
And if on me they turn as she draw near,
Love with such sweetness tempts me then and tries,
Tell it I cannot, nor recall in sooth,
For wit and language fail to reach the truth! MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXXXVI.

Liete e pensose, accompagnate e sole.

NOT FINDING HER WITH HER FRIENDS, HE ASKS THEM WHY SHE IS ABSENT.

P. PENSIVE and glad, accompanied, alone,
Ladies who cheat the time with converse gay,
Where does my life, where does my death delay?
Why not with you her form, as usual, shown?
L. Glad are we her rare lustre to have known,
And sad from her dear company to stay,
Which jealousy and envy keep away
O'er other's bliss, as their own ill who moan.
P. Who lovers can restrain, or give them law?
L. No one the soul, harshness and rage the frame;
As erst in us, this now in her appears.
As oft the face betrays the heart, we saw
Clouds that, obscuring her high beauty, came,
And in her eyes the dewy trace of tears. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CLXXXVII.

Quando 'l sol bagna in mar l' aurato carro.

HIS NIGHTS ARE, LIKE HIS DAYS, PASSED IN TORMENT.

WHEN in the sea sinks the sun's golden light,
And on my mind and nature darkness lies,
With the pale moon, faint stars and clouded skies
I pass a weary and a painful night:
To her who hears me not I then rehearse
My sad life's fruitless toils, early and late;
And with the world and with my gloomy fate,
With Love, with Laura and myself, converse.

Sleep is forbid me: I have no repose,
But sighs and groans instead, till morn returns,
And tears, with which mine eyes a sad heart feeds;
Then comes the dawn, the thick air clearer grows,
But not my soul; the sun which in it burns
Alone can cure the grief his fierce warmth breeds. NOTT.

WHEN Phœbus lashes to the western main
His fiery steeds, and shades the lurid air;
Grief shades my soul, my night is spent in care;
Yon moon, yon stars, yon heaven begin my pain.
Wretch that I am! full oft I urge in vain
To heedless beings all those pangs I bear;
Of the false world, of an unpitying Fair,
Of Love, and fickle fortune I complain!
From eve's last glance, till morning's earliest ray,
Sleep shuns my couch; rest quits my tearful eye;
And my rack'd breast heaves many a plaintive sigh.
Then bright Aurora cheers the rising day,
But cheers not me—for to my sorrowing heart
One sun alone can cheering light impart! ANON. 1777.

SONNET CLXXXVIII.

S' una fede amorosa, un cor non finto.

THE MISERY OF HIS LOVE.

IF faith most true, a heart that cannot feign,
If Love's sweet languishment and chasten'd thought,
And wishes pure by nobler feelings taught,
If in a labyrinth wanderings long and vain,
If on the brow each pang pourtray'd to bear,
Or from the heart low broken sounds to draw,
Withheld by shame, or check'd by pious awe,
If on the faded cheek Love's hue to wear,
If than myself to hold one far more dear,
If sighs that cease not, tears that ever flow,
Wrung from the heart by all Love's various woe,
In absence if consumed, and chill'd when near,—
If these be ills in which I waste my prime,
Though I the sufferer be, yours, lady, is the crime.
DACRE.

If fondest faith, a heart to guile unknown,
By melting languors the soft wish betray'd;
If chaste desires, with temper'd warmth display'd;
If weary wanderings, comfortless and lone;
If every thought in every feature shown,
Or in faint tones and broken sounds convey'd,
As fear or shame my pallid cheek array'd
In violet hues, with Love's thick blushes strown;
If more than self another to hold dear;
If still to weep and heave incessant sighs,
To feed on passion, or in grief to pine,
To glow when distant, and to freeze when near,—
If hence my bosom's anguish takes its rise,
Thine, lady, is the crime, the punishment is mine.

WRANGHAM.

SONNET CLXXXIX.

Dodici donne onestamente lasse.

HAPPY WHO STEERED THE BOAT, OR DROVE THE CAR, WHEREIN SHE SATE AND SANG.

Twelve ladies, their rare toil who lightly bore,
Rather twelve stars encircling a bright sun,
I saw, gay-seated a small bark upon,
Whose like the waters never cleaved before:
Not such took Jason to the fleece of yore,
Whose fatal gold has ev'ry heart now won,
Nor such the shepherd boy's, by whom undone
Troy mourns, whose fame has pass'd the wide world o'er.
I saw them next on a triumphal car,
Where, known by her chaste cherub ways, aside
My Laura sate and to them sweetly sung.
Things not of earth to man such visions are!
Blest Tiphys! blest Automedon! to guide
The bark, or car of band so bright and young. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXC.

Passer mai solitario in alcun tetto.

FAR FROM HIS BELOVED, LIFE IS MISERABLE BY NIGHT AS BY DAY.

Never was bird, spoil'd of its young, more sad,
Or wild beast in his lair more lone than me,

Now that no more that lovely face I see,
The only sun my fond eyes ever had.
In ceaseless sorrow is my chief delight:
My food to poison turns, to grief my joy;
The night is torture, dark the clearest sky,
And my lone pillow a hard field of fight.
Sleep is indeed, as has been well express'd,
Akin to death, for it the heart removes
From the dear thought in which alone I live.
Land above all with plenty, beauty bless'd!
Ye flowery plains, green banks and shady groves!
Ye hold the treasure for whose loss I grieve! MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXCI.

Aura, che quelle chiome bionde e crespe.

HE ENVIES THE BREEZE WHICH SPORTS WITH HER, THE STREAM THAT FLOWS TOWARDS HER.

YE laughing gales, that sporting with my fair,
The silky tangles of her locks unbraid;
And down her breast their golden treasures spread;
Then in fresh mazes weave her curling hair,
You kiss those bright destructive eyes, that bear
The flaming darts by which my heart has bled;
My trembling heart! that oft has fondly stray'd
To seek the nymph, whose eyes such terrors wear.
Methinks she's found—but oh! 'tis fancy's cheat!
Methinks she's seen—but oh! 'tis love's deceit!
Methinks she's near—but truth cries "'tis not so!"
Go happy gale, and with my Laura dwell!
Go happy stream, and to my Laura tell
What envied joys in thy clear crystal flow! ANON. 1777.

THOU gale, that movest, and disportest round
Those bright crisp'd locks, by them moved sweetly too,
That all their fine gold scatter'st to the view,
Then coil'st them up in beauteous braids fresh wound;
About those eyes thou playest, where abound
The am'rous swarms, whose stings my tears renew!
And I my treasure tremblingly pursue,
Like some scared thing that stumbles o'er the ground.

Methinks I find her now, and now perceive
She's distant; now I soar, and now descend;
Now what I wish, now what is true believe.
Stay and enjoy, blest air, the living beam;
And thou, O rapid, and translucent stream,
Why can't I change my course, and thine attend? NOTT.

SONNET CXCII.

Amor con la man destra il lato manco.

UNDER THE FIGURE OF A LAUREL, HE RELATES THE GROWTH OF HIS LOVE.

My poor heart op'ning with his puissant hand,
Love planted there, as in its home, to dwell
A Laurel, green and bright, whose hues might well
In rivalry with proudest emeralds stand:
Plough'd by my pen and by my heart-sighs fann'd,
Cool'd by the soft rain from mine eyes that fell,
It grew in grace, upbreathing a sweet smell,
Unparallel'd in any age or land.
Fair fame, bright honour, virtue firm, rare grace,
The chastest beauty in celestial frame,—
These be the roots whence birth so noble came.
Such ever in my mind her form I trace,
A happy burden and a holy thing,
To which on rev'rent knee with loving prayer I cling.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXCIII.

Cantai, or piango; e non men di dolcezza.

THOUGH IN THE MIDST OF PAIN, HE DEEMS HIMSELF THE HAPPIEST OF MEN.

I SANG, who now lament; nor less delight
Than in my song I found, in tears I find;
For on the cause and not effect inclined,
My senses still desire to scale that height:
Whence, mildly if she smile or hardly smite,
Cruel and cold her acts, or meek and kind,
All I endure, nor care what weights they bind,
E'en though her rage would break my armour quite.

Let Love and Laura, world and fortune join,
And still pursue their usual course for me,
I care not, if unblest, in life to be.
Let me or burn to death or living pine,
No gentler state than mine beneath the sun,
Since from a source so sweet my bitters run. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXCIV.

I' piansi, or canto; che 'l celeste lume.

AT HER RETURN, HIS SORROWS VANISH.

I WEPT, but now I sing; its heavenly light
That living sun conceals not from my view,
But virtuous love therein revealeth true
His holy purposes and precious might;
Whence, as his wont, such flood of sorrow springs
To shorten of my life the friendless course,
Nor bridge, nor ford, nor oar, nor sails have force
To forward mine escape, nor even wings.
But so profound and of so full a vein
My suffring is, so far its shore appears,
Scarcely to reach it can e'en thought contrive:
Nor palm, nor laurel pity prompts to gain,
But tranquil olive, and the dark sky clears,
And checks my grief and wills me to survive. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXCV.

I' mi vivea di mia sorte contento.

HE FEARS THAT AN ILLNESS WHICH HAS ATTACKED THE EYES OF LAURA MAY DEPRIVE HIM OF THEIR SIGHT.

I LIVED so tranquil, with my lot content,
No sorrow visited, nor envy pined,
To other loves if fortune were more kind
One pang of mine their thousand joys outwent;
But those bright eyes, whence never I repent
The pains I feel, nor wish them less to find,
So dark a cloud and heavy now does blind,
Seems as my sun of life in them were spent.
O Nature! mother pitiful yet stern,
Whence is the power which prompts thy wayward deeds,
Such lovely things to make and mar in turn?

True, from one living fount all power proceeds:
But how couldst Thou consent, great God of Heaven,
That aught should rob the world of what thy love had
given? MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXCVI.

Vincitore Alessandro l' ira vinse.

THE EVIL RESULTS OF UNRESTRAINED ANGER.

WHAT though the ablest artists of old time
Left us the sculptured bust, the imaged form
Of conq'ring Alexander, wrath o'ercame
And made him for the while than Philip less?
Wrath to such fury valiant Tydeus drove
That dying he devour'd his slaughter'd foe;
Wrath made not Sylla merely blear of eye,
But blind to all, and kill'd him in the end.
Well Valentinian knew that to such pain
Wrath leads, and Ajax, he whose death it wrought,
Strong against many, 'gainst himself at last.
Wrath is brief madness, and, when unrestrain'd,
Long madness, which its master often leads
To shame and crime, and haply e'en to death. ANON.

SONNET CXCVII.

Qual ventura mi fu, quando dall' uno.

HE REJOICES AT PARTICIPATING IN HER SUFFERINGS.

STRANGE, passing strange adventure! when from one
Of the two brightest eyes which ever were,
Beholding it with pain disturb'd and dim,
Moved influence which my own made dull and weak.
I had return'd, to break the weary fast
Of seeing her, my sole care in this world,
Kinder to me were Heaven and Love than e'en
If all their other gifts together join'd,
When from the right eye—rather the right sun—
Of my dear Lady to my right eye came
The ill which less my pain than pleasure makes;
As if it intellect possess'd and wings
It pass'd, as stars that shoot along the sky:
Nature and pity then pursued their course. ANON.

SONNET CXCVIII.

O cameretta che già fosti un porto.

HE NO LONGER FINDS RELIEF IN SOLITUDE.

THOU little chamber'd haven to the woes
Whose daily tempest overwhelms my soul!
From shame, I in Heaven's light my grief control;
Thou art its fountain, which each night o'erflows.
My couch! that oft hath woo'd me to repose,
'Mid sorrows vast—Love's ivried hand hath stole
Grief's turgid stream, which o'er thee it doth roll,
That hand which good on all but me bestows.
Not only quiet and sweet rest I fly,
But from myself and thought, whose vain pursuit
On pinion'd fancy doth my soul transport:
The multitude I did so long defy,
Now as my hope and refuge I salute,
So much I tremble solitude to court. WOLLASTON.

ROOM! which to me hast been a port and shield
From life's rude daily tempests for long years,
Now the full fountain of my nightly tears
Which in the day I bear for shame conceal'd:
Bed! which, in woes so great, wert wont to yield
Comfort and rest, an urn of doubts and fears
Love o'er thee now from those fair hands uprears,
Cruel and cold to me alone reveal'd.
But e'en than solitude and rest, I flee
More from myself and melancholy thought,
In whose vain quest my soul has heavenward flown.
The crowd long hateful, hostile e'en to me,
Strange though it sound, for refuge have I sought,
Such fear have I to find myself alone! MACGREGOR.

SONNET CXCIX.

Lasso! Amor mi trasporta ov' io non voglio.

HE EXCUSES HIMSELF FOR VISITING LAURA TOO OFTEN, AND LOVING HER TOO MUCH.

ALAS! Love bears me where I would not go,
And well I see how duty is transgress'd,
And how to her who, queen-like, rules my breast,
More than my wont importunate I grow.

Never from rocks wise sailor guarded so
His ship of richest merchandise possess'd,
As evermore I shield my bark distress'd
From shocks of her hard pride that would o'erthrow.
Torrents of tears, fierce winds of infinite sighs
—For, in my sea, nights horrible and dark
And pitiless winter reign—have driven my bark,
Sail-less and helm-less where it shatter'd lies,
Or, drifting at the mercy of the main,
Trouble to others bears, distress to me and pain.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CC.

Amor, io fallo e veggio il mio fallire.

HE PRAYS LOVE, WHO IS THE CAUSE OF HIS OFFENCES, TO OBTAIN PARDON FOR HIM.

O LOVE, I err, and I mine error own,
As one who burns, whose fire within him lies
And aggravates his grief, while reason dies,
With its own martyrdom almost o'erthrown.
I strove mine ardent longing to restrain,
Her fair calm face that I might ne'er disturb:
I can no more; falls from my hand the curb,
And my despairing soul is bold again;
Wherefore if higher than her wont she aim,
The act is thine, who firest and spur'st her so,
No way too rough or steep for her to go:
But the rare heavenly gifts are most to blame
Shrined in herself: let her at least feel this,
Lest of my faults her pardon I should miss. MACGREGOR.

SESTINA VII.

Non ha tanti animali il mar fra l' onde.

HE DESPAIRS OF ESCAPE FROM THE TORMENTS BY WHICH HE IS SURROUNDED.

NOT Ocean holds such swarms amid his waves,
Not overhead, where circles the pale moon,
Were stars so numerous ever seen by night,
Nor dwell so many birds among the woods,

Nor plants so many clothe the field or hill,
As holds my tost heart busy thoughts each eve.

Each day I hope that this my latest eve
Shall part from my quick clay the sad salt waves,
And leave me in last sleep on some cold hill;
So many torments man beneath the moon
Ne'er bore as I have borne; this know the woods
Through which I wander lonely day and night.

For never have I had a tranquil night,
But ceaseless sighs instead from morn till eve,
Since love first made me tenant of the woods:
The sea, ere I can rest, shall lose his waves,
The sun his light shall borrow from the moon,
And April flowers be blasted o'er each hill.

Thus, to myself a prey, from hill to hill,
Pensive by day I roam, and weep at night,
No one state mine, but changeful as the moon;
And when I see approaching the brown eve,
Sighs from my bosom, from my eyes fall waves,
The herbs to moisten and to move the woods.

Hostile the cities, friendly are the woods
To thoughts like mine, which, on this lofty hill,
Mingle their murmur with the moaning waves,
Through the sweet silence of the spangled night,
So that the livelong day I wait the eve,
When the sun sets and rises the fair moon.

Would, like Endymion, 'neath the enamour'd moon,
That slumbering I were laid in leafy woods,
And that ere vesper she who makes my eve,
With Love and Luna on that favour'd hill,
Alone, would come, and stay but one sweet night,
While stood the sun nor sought his western waves.

Upon the hard waves, 'neath the beaming moon,
Song, that art born of night amid the woods,
Thou shalt a rich hill see to-morrow eve! MACGREGOR.

COUNT the ocean's finny droves;
Count the twinkling host of stars,
Round the night's pale orb that moves;
Count the groves' wing'd choristers;

Count each verdant blade that grows;
Counted then will be my woes.

When shall these eyes cease to weep;
When shall this world-wearied frame,
Cover'd by the cold sod, sleep?—
Sure, beneath yon planet's beam,
None like me have made such moan;
This to every bower is known.

Sad my nights; from morn till eve,
Tenanting the woods, I sigh:
But, ere I shall cease to grieve,
Ocean's vast bed shall be dry,
Suns their light from moons shall gain,
And spring wither on each plain.

Pensive, weeping, night and day,
From this shore to that I fly,
Changeful as the lunar ray;
And, when evening veils the sky,
Then my tears might swell the floods,
Then my sighs might bow the woods!

Towns I hate, the shades I love;
For relief to yon green height,
Where the rill resounds, I rove
At the grateful calm of night;
There I wait the day's decline,
For the welcome moon to shine.

Oh, that in some lone retreat,
Like Endymion I were lain;
And that she, who rules my fate,
There one night to stay would deign;
Never from his billowy bed
More might Phœbus lift his head!

Song, that on the wood-hung stream
In the silent hour wert born,
Witness'd but by Cynthia's beam,
Soon as breaks to-morrow's morn,
Thou shalt seek a glorious plain,
There with Laura to remain!

SESTINA VIII.

Là ver l' aurora, che sì dolce l' aura.

SHE IS MOVED NEITHER BY HIS VERSES NOR HIS TEARS.

WHEN music warbles from each thorn,
And Zephyr's dewy wings
Sweep the young flowers; what time the morn
Her crimson radiance flings:
Then, as the smiling year renews,
I feel renew'd Love's tender pain;
Renew'd is Laura's cold disdain;
And I for comfort court the weeping muse.

Oh! could my sighs in accents flow
So musically lorn,
That thou might'st catch my am'rous woe,
And cease, proud Maid! thy scorn:
Yet, ere within thy icy breast
The smallest spark of passion's found,
Winter's cold temples shall be bound
With all the blooms that paint spring's glowing vest.

The drops that bathe the grief-dew'd eye,
The love-impassion'd strain
To move thy flinty bosom try
Full oft;—but, ah! in vain
Would tears, and melting song avail;
As vainly might the silken breeze,
That bends the flowers, that fans the trees,
Some rugged rock's tremendous brow assail.

Both gods and men alike are sway'd
By Love, as poets tell;—
And I, when flowers in every shade
Their bursting gems reveal,
First felt his all-subduing power:
While Laura knows not yet the smart;
Nor heeds the tortures of my heart,
My prayers, my plaints, and sorrow's pearly shower!

Thy wrongs, my soul! with patience bear,
While life shall warm this clay;
And soothing sounds to Laura's ear
My numbers shall convey;

Numbers with forceful magic charm
All nature o'er the frost-bound earth,
Wake summer's fragrant buds to birth,
And the fierce serpent of its rage disarm.
The blossom'd shrubs in smiles are drest,
Now laughs his purple plain;
And shall the nymph a foe profest
To tenderness remain?
But oh! what solace shall I find,
If fortune dooms me yet to bear
The frowns of my relentless Fair,
Save with soft moan to vex the pitying wind?
In baffling nets the light-wing'd gale
I'd fetter as it blows,
The vernal rose that scents the vale
I'd cull on wintery snows;
Still I'd ne'er hope that mind to move
Which dares defy the wiles of verse, and Love.

ANON. 1777.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC

SONNET CCI.

Real natura, angelico intelletto.

ON THE KISS OF HONOUR GIVEN BY CHARLES OF LUXEMBURG TO LAURA AT A BANQUET.

A KINGLY nature, an angelic mind,
A spotless soul, prompt aspect and keen eye,
Quick penetration, contemplation high
And truly worthy of the breast which shrined:
In bright assembly lovely ladies join'd
To grace that festival with gratulant joy,
Amid so many and fair faces nigh
Soon his good judgment did the fairest find.
Of riper age and higher rank the rest
Gently he beckon'd with his hand aside,
And lovingly drew near the perfect ONE:
So courteously her eyes and brow he press'd,
All at his choice in fond approval vied—
Envy through my sole veins at that sweet freedom run.

MACGREGOR.

A SOVEREIGN nature,—an exalted mind,—
A soul proud—sleepless—with a lynx's eye,—

An instant foresight,—thought as towering high,
E'en as the heart in which they are enshrined:
A bright assembly on that day combined
Each other in his honour to outvie,
When 'mid the fair his judgment did descry
That sweet perfection all to her resign'd.
Unmindful of her rival sisterhood,
He motion'd silently his preference,
And fondly welcomed her, that humblest one:
So pure a kiss he gave, that all who stood,
Though fair, rejoiced in beauty's recompense:
By that strange act my heart was quite undone!

WOLLASTON.

SONNET CCII.

I' ho pregato Amor, e nel riprego.

HE PLEADS THE EXCESS OF HIS PASSION IN PALLIATION OF HIS FAULT.

OFT have I pray'd to Love, and still I pray,
My charming agony, my bitter joy!
That he would crave your grace, if consciously
From the right path my guilty footsteps stray.
That Reason, which o'er happier minds holds sway,
Is quell'd of Appetite, I not deny;
And hence, through tracks my better thoughts would fly,
The victor hurries me perforce away.
You, in whose bosom Genius, Virtue reign
With mingled blaze lit by auspicious skies—
Ne'er shower'd kind star its beams on aught so rare!
You, you should say with pity, not disdain;
"How could he 'scape, lost wretch! these lightning eyes—
So passionate he, and I so direly fair?"

WRANGHAM.

SONNET CCIII.

L' alto signor, dinanzi a cui non vale.

HIS SORROW FOR THE ILLNESS OF LAURA INCREASES, NOT LESSENS, HIS FLAME.

THE sovereign Lord, 'gainst whom of no avail.
Concealment, or resistance is, or flight,
My mind had kindled to a new delight
By his own amorous and ardent ail:

Though his first blow, transfixing my best mail
Were mortal sure, to push his triumph quite
He took a shaft of sorrow in his right,
So my soft heart on both sides to assail.
A burning wound the one shed fire and flame,
The other tears, which ever grief distils,
Through eyes for your weak health that are as rills.
But no relief from either fountain came
My bosom's conflagration to abate,
Nay, passion grew by very pity great. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCIV.

Mira quel colle, o stanco mio cor vago.

HE BIDS HIS HEART RETURN TO LAURA, NOT PERCEIVING THAT IT HAD NEVER LEFT HER.

P. LOOK on that hill, my fond but harass'd heart!
Yestreen we left her there, who 'gan to take
Some care of us and friendlier looks to dart;
Now from our eyes she draws a very lake:
Return alone—I love to be apart—
Try, if perchance the day will ever break
To mitigate our still increasing smart,
Partner and prophet of my lifelong ache.
H. O wretch! in whom vain thoughts and idle swell,
Thou, who thyself hast tutor'd to forget,
Speak'st to thy heart as if 'twere with thee yet?
When to thy greatest bliss thou saidst farewell,
Thou didst depart alone: it stay'd with her,
Nor cares from those bright eyes, its home, to stir.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCV.

Fresco ambroso fiorito e verde colle.

HE CONGRATULATES HIS HEART ON ITS REMAINING WITH HER.

O HILL with green o'erspread, with groves o'erhung!
Where musing now, now trilling her sweet lay,
Most like what bards of heavenly spirits say,
Sits she by fame through every region sung:
My heart, which wisely unto her has clung—
More wise, if there, in absence blest, it stay!

Notes now the turf o'er which her soft steps stray,
Now where her angel-eyes' mild beam is flung;
Then throbs and murmurs, as they onward rove,
"Ah! were he here, that man of wretched lot,
Doom'd but to taste the bitterness of love!"
She, conscious, smiles: our feelings tally not:
Heartless am I, mere stone; heaven is thy grove—
O dear delightful shade, O consecrated spot! WRANGHAM.

FRESH, shaded hill! with flowers and verdure crown'd,
Where, in fond musings, or with music sweet,
To earth a heaven-sent spirit takes her seat!
She who from all the world has honour found.
Forsaking me, to her my fond heart bound
—Divorce for aye were welcome as discreet—
Notes where the turf is mark'd by her fair feet,
Or from these eyes for her in sorrow drown'd,
Then inly whispers as her steps advance,
"Would for awhile that wretch were here alone
Who pines already o'er his bitter lot."
She conscious smiles. Not equal is the chance;
An Eden thou, while I a heartless stone.
O holy, happy, and beloved spot! MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCVI.

Il mal mi preme, e mi spaventa il peggio.

TO A FRIEND, IN LOVE LIKE HIMSELF, HE CAN GIVE NO ADVICE BUT TO RAISE HIS SOUL TO GOD.

EVIL oppresses me and worse dismay,
To which a plain and ample way I find;
Driven like thee by frantic passion, blind,
Urged by harsh thoughts I bend like thee my way.
Nor know I if for war or peace to pray:
To war is ruin, shame to peace, assign'd.
But wherefore languish thus?—Rather, resign'd,
Whate'er the Will Supreme ordains, obey.
However ill that honour me beseem
By thee conferr'd, whom that affection cheats
Which many a perfect eye to error sways,
To raise thy spirit to that realm supreme
My counsel is, and win those blissful seats:
For short the time, and few the allotted days. CAPEL LOFFT.

THE bad oppresses me, the worse dismays,
To which so broad and plain a path I see;
My spirit, to like frenzy led with thee,
Tried by the same hard thoughts, in dotage strays,
Nor knows if peace or war of God it prays,
Though great the loss and deep the shame to me.
But why pine longer? Best our lot will be,
What Heaven's high will ordains when man obeys.
Though I of that great honour worthless prove
Offer'd by thee—herein Love leads to err
Who often makes the sound eye to see wrong—
My counsel this, instant on Heaven above
Thy soul to elevate, thy heart to spur,
For though the time be short, the way is long.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCVII.

Due rose fresche, e colte in paradiso.

THE TWO ROSES.

Two brilliant roses, fresh from Paradise,
Which there, on May-day morn, in beauty sprung
Fair gift, and by a lover old and wise
Equally offer'd to two lovers young:
At speech so tender and such winning guise,
As transports from a savage might have wrung,
A living lustre lit their mutual eyes,
And instant on their cheeks a soft blush hung.
The sun ne'er look'd upon a lovelier pair,
With a sweet smile and gentle sigh he said,
Pressing the hands of both and turn'd away.
Of words and roses each alike had share.
E'en now my worn heart thrill with joy and dread,
O happy eloquence! O blessed day! MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCVIII.

L' aura, che 'l verde Lauro e l' aureo crine.

HE PRAYS THAT HE MAY DIE BEFORE LAURA.

THE balmy gale, that, with its tender sigh,
Moves the green laurel and the golden hair,

Makes with its graceful visitings and rare
The gazer's spirit from his body fly.
A sweet and snow-white rose in hard thorns set!
Where in the world her fellow shall we find?
The glory of our age! Creator kind!
Grant that ere hers my death shall first be met.
So the great public loss I may not see,
The world without its sun, in darkness left,
And from my desolate eyes their sole light reft,
My mind with which no other thoughts agree,
Mine ears which by no other sound are stirr'd
Except her ever pure and gentle word. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCIX.

Parrà forse ad alcun, che 'n lodar quella.

HE INVITES THOSE TO WHOM HIS PRAISES SEEM EXCESSIVE TO BEHOLD THE OBJECT OF THEM.

HAPLY my style to some may seem too free
In praise of her who holds my being's chain,
Queen of her sex describing her to reign,
Wise, winning, good, fair, noble, chaste to be:
To me it seems not so; I fear that she
My lays as low and trifling may disdain,
Worthy a higher and a better strain;
—Who thinks not with me let him come and see.
Then will he say, She whom his wishes seek
Is one indeed whose grace and worth might tire
The muses of all lands and either lyre.
But mortal tongue for state divine is weak,
And may not soar; by flattery and force,
As Fate not choice ordains, Love rules its course.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCX.

Chi vuol veder quantunque può Natura.

WHOEVER BEHOLDS HER MUST ADMIT THAT HIS PRAISES CANNOT REACH HER PERFECTION.

WHO wishes to behold the utmost might
Of Heaven and Nature, on her let him gaze,
Sole sun, not only in my partial lays,
But to the dark world, blind to virtue's light!

And let him haste to view; for death in spite
The guilty leaves, and on the virtuous preys;
For this loved angel heaven impatient stays;
And mortal charms are transient as they're bright!
Here shall he see, if timely he arrive,
Virtue and beauty, royalty of mind,
In one bless'd union join'd. Then shall he say
That vainly my weak rhymes to praise her strive,
Whose dazzling beams have struck my genius blind.—
He must for ever weep if he delay! CHARLEMONT.

STRANGER, whose curious glance delights to trace
What Heaven and Nature join'd to frame most rare;
Here view mine eyes' bright sun—a sight so fair,
That purblind worlds, like me, enamour'd gaze.
But speed thy step; for Death with rapid pace
Pursues the best, nor makes the bad his care:
Call'd to the skies through yon blue fields of air,
On buoyant plume the mortal grace obeys.
Then haste, and mark in one rich form combined
(And, for that dazzling lustre dimm'd mine eye,
Chide the weak efforts of my trembling lay)
Each charm of person, and each power of mind—
But, slowly if thy lingering foot comply,
Grief and repentant shame shall mourn the brief delay.
WRANGHAM.

SONNET CCXI.

Qual paura ho, quando mi torna a mente.

MELANCHOLY RECOLLECTIONS AND PRESAGES.

O LAURA! when my tortured mind
The sad remembrance bears
Of that ill-omen'd day,
When, victim to a thousand doubts and fears,
I left my soul behind,
That soul that could not from its partner stray;
In nightly visions to my longing eyes
Thy form oft seems to rise,
As ever thou wert seen,
Fair like the rose, 'midst paling flowers the queen.

But loosely in the wind,
Unbraided wave the ringlets of thy hair,
That late with studious care,
I saw with pearls and flowery garlands twined:
On thy wan lip, no cheerful smile appears;
Thy beauteous face a tender sadness wears;
Placid in pain thou seem'st, serene in grief,
As conscious of thy fate, and hopeless of relief!
Cease, cease, presaging heart! O angels, deign
To hear my fervent prayer, that all my fears be vain!

WOODHOUSELEE.

WHAT dread I feel when I revolve the day
I left my mistress, sad, without repose,
My heart too with her: and my fond thought knows
Nought on which gladlier, oft'ner it can stay.
Again my fancy doth her form portray
Meek among beauty's train, like to some rose
Midst meaner flowers; nor joy nor grief she shows;
Not with misfortune prest but with dismay.
Then were thrown by her custom'd cheerfulness,
Her pearls, her chaplets, and her gay attire,
Her song, her laughter, and her mild address;
Thus doubtingly I quitted her I love:
Now dark ideas, dreams, and bodings dire
Raise terrors, which Heaven grant may groundless prove!

NOTT.

SONNET CCXII.

Solea lontana in sonno consolarme.

SHE ANNOUNCES TO HIM, IN A VISION, THAT HE WILL NEVER SEE HER MORE.

To soothe me distant far, in days gone by,
With dreams of one whose glance all heaven combined,
Was mine; now fears and sorrow haunt my mind,
Nor can I from that grief, those terrors fly:
For oft in sleep I mark within her eye
Deep pity with o'erwhelming sadness join'd;
And oft I seem to hear on every wind
Accents, which from my breast chase peace and joy.
"That last dark eve," she cries, "remember'st thou,
When to those doting eyes I bade farewell,

Forced by the time's relentless tyranny?
I had not then the power, nor heart to tell,
What thou shalt find, alas! too surely true—
Hope not again on earth thy Laura's face to see."

WRANGHAM.

SONNET CCXIII.

O misera ed orribil visione.

HE CANNOT BELIEVE IN HER DEATH, BUT IF TRUE, HE PRAYS GOD TO TAKE HIM ALSO FROM LIFE.

O MISERY! horror! can it, then, be true,
That the sweet light before its time is spent,
'Mid all its pains which could my life content,
And ever with fresh hopes of good renew?
If so, why sounds not other channels through,
Nor only from herself, the great event?
No! God and Nature could not thus consent,
And my dark fears are groundless and undue.
Still it delights my heart to hope once more
The welcome sight of that enchanting face,
The glory of our age, and life to me.
But if, to her eternal home to soar,
That heavenly spirit have left her earthly place,
Oh! then not distant may my last day be! MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCXIV.

In dubbio di mio stato, or piango, or canto.

TO HIS LONGING TO SEE HER AGAIN IS NOW ADDED THE FEAR OF SEEING HER NO MORE.

UNCERTAIN of my state, I weep and sing,
I hope and tremble, and with rhymes and sighs
I ease my load, while Love his utmost tries
How worse my sore afflicted heart to sting.
Will her sweet seraph face again e'er bring
Their former light to these despairing eyes,
(What to expect, alas! or how advise)
Or must eternal grief my bosom wring?
For heaven, which justly it deserves to win,

It cares not what on earth may be their fate,
Whose sun it was, where centred their sole gaze.
Such terror, so perpetual warfare in,
Changed from my former self, I live of late
As one who midway doubts, and fears and strays.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCXV.

O dolci sguardi, o parolette accorte.

HE SIGHS FOR THOSE GLANCES FROM WHICH, TO HIS GRIEF, FORTUNE EVER DELIGHTS TO WITHDRAW HIM.

O ANGEL looks! O accents of the skies!
Shall I or see or hear you once again?
O golden tresses, which my heart enchain,
And lead it forth, Love's willing sacrifice!
O face of beauty given in anger's guise,
Which still I not enjoy, and still complain!
O dear delusion! O bewitching pain!
Transports, at once my punishment and prize!
If haply those soft eyes some kindly beam
(Eyes, where my soul and all my thoughts reside)
Vouchsafe, in tender pity to bestow;
Sudden, of all my joys the murtheress tried,
Fortune with steed or ship dispels the gleam;
Fortune, with stern behest still prompt to work my woe.
WRANGHAM.

O GENTLE looks! O words of heavenly sound!
Shall I behold you, hear you once again?
O waving locks, that Love has made the chain,
In which this wretched ruin'd heart is bound!
O face divine! whose magic spells surround
My soul, distemper'd with unceasing pain:
O dear deceit! O loving errors vain!
To hug the dart and doat upon the wound!
Did those soft eyes, in whose angelic light
My life, my thoughts, a constant mansion find,
Ever impart a pure unmixed delight?
Or if they have one moment, then unkind
Fortune steps in, and sends me from their sight,
And gives my opening pleasures to the wind. MOREHEAD.

SONNET CCXVI.

I' pur ascolto, e non odo novella.

HEARING NO TIDINGS OF HER, HE BEGINS TO DESPAIR.

STILL do I wait to hear, in vain still wait,
Of that sweet enemy I love so well:
What now to think or say I cannot tell,
'Twixt hope and fear my feelings fluctuate:
The beautiful are still the marks of fate;
And sure her worth and beauty most excel:
What if her God have call'd her hence, to dwell
Where virtue finds a more congenial state?
If so, she will illuminate that sphere
Even as a sun: but I—'tis done with me!
I then am nothing, have no business here!
O cruel absence! why not let me see
The worst? my little tale is told, I fear,
My scene is closed ere it accomplish'd be. MOREHEAD.

No tidings yet—I listen, but in vain;
Of her, my beautiful beloved foe,
What or to think or say I nothing know,
So thrills my heart, my fond hopes so sustain.
Danger to some has in their beauty lain;
Fairer and chaster she than others show;
God haply seeks to snatch from earth below
Virtue's best friend, that heaven a star may gain,
Or rather sun. If what I dread be nigh,
My life, its trials long, its brief repose
Are ended all. O cruel absence! why
Didst thou remove me from the menaced woes?
My short sad story is already done,
And midway in its course my vain race run. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCXVII.

La sera desiar, odiar l' aurora.

CONTRARY TO THE WONT OF LOVERS, HE PREFERS MORN TO EVE.

TRANQUIL and happy loves in this agree,
The evening to desire and morning hate:
On me at eve redoubled sorrows wait—
Morning is still the happier hour for me,

For then my sun and Nature's oft I see
Opening at once the orient's rosy gate,
So match'd in beauty and in lustre great,
Heaven seems enamour'd of our earth to be!
As when in verdant leaf the dear boughs burst
Whose roots have since so centred in my core,
Another than myself is cherish'd more.
Thus the two hours contrast, day's last and first:
Reason it is who calms me to desire,
And fear and hate who fiercer feed my fire. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCXVIII.

Far potess' io vendetta di colei.

HIS SOUL VISITS HER IN SLEEP.

OH! that from her some vengeance I could wrest
With words and glances who my peace destroys,
And then abash'd, for my worse sorrow, flies,
Veiling her eyes so cruel, yet so blest;
Thus mine afflicted spirits and oppress'd
By sure degrees she sorely drains and dries,
And in my heart, as savage lion, cries
Even at night, when most I should have rest.
My soul, which sleep expels from his abode,
The body leaves, and, from its trammels free,
Seeks her whose mien so often menace show'd.
I marvel much, if heard its advent be,
That while to her it spake, and o'er her wept,
And round her clung, asleep she alway kept. MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCXIX.

In quel bel viso, ch' i' sospiro e bramo.

ON LAURA PUTTING HER HAND BEFORE HER EYES WHILE HE WAS GAZING ON HER.

ON the fair face for which I long and sigh
Mine eyes were fasten'd with desire intense,
When, to my fond thoughts, Love, in best reply,
Her honour'd hand uplifting, shut me thence.
My heart there caught—as fish a fair hook by,
Or as a young bird on a limèd fence—

For good deeds follow from example high,
To truth directed not its busied sense.
But of its one desire my vision reft,
As dreamingly, soon oped itself a way,
Which closed, its bliss imperfect had been left:
My soul between those rival glories lay,
Fill'd with a heavenly and new delight,
Whose strange surpassing sweets engross'd it quite.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCXX.

Vive faville uscian de' duo bei lumi.

A SMILING WELCOME, WHICH LAURA GAVE HIM UNEXPECTEDLY, ALMOST KILLS HIM WITH JOY.

LIVE sparks were glistening from her twin bright eyes,
So sweet on me whose lightning flashes beam'd,
And softly from a feeling heart and wise,
Of lofty eloquence a rich flood stream'd:
Even the memory serves to wake my sighs;
When I recall that day so glad esteem'd,
And in my heart its sinking spirit dies
As some late grace her colder wont redeem'd.
My soul in pain and grief that most has been
(How great the power of constant habit is!)
Seems weakly 'neath its double joy to lean:
For at the sole taste of unusual bliss,
Trembling with fear, or thrill'd by idle hope,
Oft on the point I've been life's door to ope. MACGREGOR

SONNET CCXXI.

Cercato ho sempre solitaria vita.

THINKING ALWAYS OF LAURA, IT PAINS HIM TO REMEMBER WHERE SHE IS LEFT.

STILL have I sought a life of solitude;
The streams, the fields, the forests know my mind;
That I might 'scape the sordid and the blind,
Who paths forsake trod by the wise and good:
Fain would I leave, were mine own will pursued,
These Tuscan haunts, and these soft skies behind,
Sorga's thick-wooded hills again to find;

And sing and weep in concert with its flood.
But Fortune, ever my sore enemy,
Compels my steps, where I with sorrow see
Cast my fair treasure in a worthless soil:
Yet less a foe she justly deigns to prove,
For once, to me, to Laura, and to love;
Favouring my song, my passion, with her smile. NOTT.

STILL have I sought a life of solitude—
This know the rivers, and each wood and plain—
That I might 'scape the blind and sordid train
Who from the path have flown of peace and good:
Could I my wish obtain, how vainly would
This cloudless climate woo me to remain;
Sorga's embowering woods I'd seek again,
And sing, weep, wander, by its friendly flood.
But, ah! my fortune, hostile still to me,
Compels me where I must, indignant, find
Amid the mire my fairest treasure thrown:
Yet to my hand, not all unworthy, she
Now proves herself, at least for once, more kind,
Since—but alone to Love and Laura be it known.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCXXII.

In tale stella duo begli occhi vidi.

THE BEAUTY OF LAURA IS PEERLESS.

IN one fair star I saw two brilliant eyes,
With sweetness, modesty, so glistening o'er,
That soon those graceful nests of Love before
My worn heart learnt all others to despise:
Equall'd not her whoever won the prize
In ages gone on any foreign shore;
Not she to Greece whose wondrous beauty bore
Unnumber'd ills, to Troy death's anguish'd cries:
Not the fair Roman, who, with ruthless blade
Piercing her chaste and outraged bosom, fled
Dishonour worse than death, like charms display'd;
Such excellence should brightest glory shed
On Nature, as on me supreme delight,
But, ah! too lately come, too soon it takes its flight.
MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCXXIII.

Qual donna attende a gloriosa fama.

THE EYES OF LAURA ARE THE SCHOOL OF VIRTUE.

FEELS any fair the glorious wish to gain
Of sense, of worth, of courtesy, the praise?
On those bright eyes attentive let her gaze
Of her miscall'd my love, but sure my foe.
Honour to gain, with love of God to glow,
Virtue more bright how native grace displays,
May there be learn'd; and by what surest ways
To heaven, that for her coming pants, to go.
The converse sweet, beyond what poets write,
Is there; the winning silence, and the meek
And saint-like manners man would paint in vain.
The matchless beauty, dazzling to the sight,
Can ne'er be learn'd; for bootless 'twere to seek
By art, what by kind chance alone we gain.

ANON., OX., 1795.

SONNET CCXXIV.

Cara la vita, e dopo lei mi pare.

HONOUR TO BE PREFERRED TO LIFE.

METHINKS that life in lovely woman first,
And after life true honour should be dear;
Nay, wanting honour—of all wants the worst—
Friend! nought remains of loved or lovely here.
And who, alas! has honour's barrier burst,
Unsex'd and dead, though fair she yet appear,
Leads a vile life, in shame and torment curst,
A lingering death, where all is dark and drear.
To me no marvel was Lucretia's end,
Save that she needed, when that last disgrace
Alone sufficed to kill, a sword to die.
Sophists in vain the contrary defend:
Their arguments are feeble all and base,
And truth alone triumphant mounts on high!

SONNET CCXXV.

Arbor vittoriosa e trionfale.

HE EXTOLS THE VIRTUE OF LAURA.

TREE, victory's bright guerdon, wont to crown
Heroes and bards with thy triumphal leaf,
How many days of mingled joy and grief
Have I from thee through life's short passage known?
Lady, who, reckless of the world's renown,
Reapest in virtue's field fair honour's sheaf;
Nor fear'st Love's limèd snares, "that subtle thief,"
While calm discretion on his wiles looks down.
The pride of birth, with all that here we deem
Most precious, gems and gold's resplendent grace,
Abject alike in thy regard appear:
Nay, even thine own unrivall'd beauties beam
No charm to thee—save as their circling blaze
Clasps fitly that chaste soul, which still thou hold'st most dear. WRANGHAM.

BLEST laurel! fadeless and triumphant tree!
Of kings and poets thou the fondest pride!
How much of joy and sorrow's changing tide
In my short breath hath been awaked by thee!
Lady, the will's sweet sovereign! thou canst see
No bliss but virtue, where thou dost preside;
Love's chain, his snare, thou dost alike deride;
From man's deceit thy wisdom sets thee free.
Birth's native pride, and treasure's precious store,
(Whose bright possession we so fondly hail)
To thee as burthens valueless appear:
Thy beauty's excellence—(none viewed before)
Thy soul had wearied—but thou lov'st the veil,
That shrine of purity adorneth here. WOLLASTON.

CANZONE XXI.

I' vo pensando, e nel pensier m' assale.

SELF-CONFLICT.

CEASELESS I think, and in each wasting thought
So strong a pity for myself appears,

That often it has brought
My harass'd heart to new yet natural tears;
Seeing each day my end of life draw nigh,
Instant in prayer, I ask of God the wings
With which the spirit springs,
Freed from its mortal coil, to bliss on high;
But nothing, to this hour, prayer, tear, or sigh,
Whatever man could do, my hopes sustain:
And so indeed in justice should it be;
Able to stay, who went and fell, that he
Should prostrate, in his own despite, remain.
But, lo! the tender arms
In which I trust are open to me still,
Though fears my bosom fill
Of others' fate, and my own heart alarms,
Which worldly feelings spur, haply, to utmost ill.

One thought thus parleys with my troubled mind—
"What still do you desire, whence succour wait?
Ah! wherefore to this great,
This guilty loss of time so madly blind?
Take up at length, wisely take up your part:
Tear every root of pleasure from your heart,
Which ne'er can make it blest,
Nor lets it freely play, nor calmly rest.
If long ago with tedium and disgust
You view'd the false and fugitive delights
With which its tools a treacherous world requites,
Why longer then repose in it your trust,
Whence peace and firmness are in exile thrust?
While life and vigour stay,
The bridle of your thoughts is in your power:
Grasp, guide it while you may:
So clogg'd with doubt, so dangerous is delay,
The best for wise reform is still the present hour.

"Well known to you what rapture still has been
Shed on your eyes by the dear sight of her
Whom, for your peace it were
Better if she the light had never seen;
And you remember well (as well you ought)

Her image, when, as with one conquering bound,
Your heart in prey she caught,
Where flame from other light no entrance found.
She fired it, and if that fallacious heat
Lasted long years, expecting still one day,
Which for our safety came not, to repay,
It lifts you now to hope more blest and sweet,
Uplooking to that heaven around your head
Immortal, glorious spread;
If but a glance, a brief word, an old song,
Had here such power to charm
Your eager passion, glad of its own harm,
How far 'twill then exceed if now the joy so strong."

Another thought the while, severe and sweet,
Laborious, yet delectable in scope,
Takes in my heart its seat,
Filling with glory, feeding it with hope;
Till, bent alone on bright and deathless fame,
It feels not when I freeze, or burn in flame,
When I am pale or ill,
And if I crush it rises stronger still.
This, from my helpless cradle, day by day,
Has strengthen'd with my strength, grown with my growth,
Till haply now one tomb must cover both:
When from the flesh the soul has pass'd away,
No more this passion comrades it as here;
For fame—if, after death,
Learning speak aught of me—is but a breath:
Wherefore, because I fear
Hopes to indulge which the next hour may chase,
I would old error leave, and the one truth embrace.

But the third wish which fills and fires my heart
O'ershadows all the rest which near it spring:
Time, too, dispels a part,
While, but for her, self-reckless grown, I sing.
And then the rare light of those beauteous eyes,
Sweetly before whose gentle heat I melt,
As a fine curb is felt,
To combat which avails not wit or force;

What boots it, trammell'd by such adverse ties,
If still between the rocks must lie her course,
To trim my little bark to new emprize?
Ah! wilt Thou never, Lord, who yet dost keep
Me safe and free from common chains, which bind,
In different modes, mankind,
Deign also from my brow this shame to sweep?
For, as one sunk in sleep,
Methinks death ever present to my sight,
Yet when I would resist I have no arms to fight.

Full well I see my state, in nought deceived
By truth ill known, but rather forced by Love,
Who leaves not him to move
In honour, who too much his grace believed:
For o'er my heart from time to time I feel
A subtle scorn, a lively anguish, steal,
Whence every hidden thought,
Where all may see, upon my brow is writ.
For with such faith on mortal things to dote,
As unto God alone is just and fit,
Disgraces worst the prize who covets most:
Should reason, amid things of sense, be lost,
This loudly calls her to the proper track:
But, when she would obey
And home return, ill habits keep her back,
And to my view portray
Her who was only born my death to be,
Too lovely in herself, too loved, alas! by me.

I neither know, to me what term of life
Heaven destined when on earth I came at first
To suffer this sharp strife,
'Gainst my own peace which I myself have nursed,
Nor can I, for the veil my body throws,
Yet see the time when my sad life may close.
I feel my frame begin
To fail, and vary each desire within:
And now that I believe my parting day
Is near at hand, or else not distant lies,
Like one whom losses wary make and wise,
I travel back in thought, where first the way,

The right-hand way, I left, to peace which led.
While through me shame and grief,
Recalling the vain past on this side spread,
On that brings no relief,
Passion, whose strength I now from habit, feel,
So great that it would dare with death itself to deal.

Song! I am here, my heart the while more cold
With fear than frozen snow,
Feels in its certain core death's coming blow;
For thus, in weak self-communing, has roll'd
Of my vain life the better portion by:
Worse burden surely ne'er
Tried mortal man than that which now I bear;
Though death be seated nigh,
For future life still seeking councils new,
I know and love the good, yet, ah! the worse pursue.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCXXVI.

Aspro core e selvaggio, e cruda voglia.

HOPE ALONE SUPPORTS HIM IN HIS MISERY.

HARD heart and cold, a stern will past belief,
In angel form of gentle sweet allure;
If thus her practised rigour long endure,
O'er me her triumph will be poor and brief.
For when, or spring, or die, flower, herb, and leaf,
When day is brightest, night when most obscure,
Alway I weep. Great cause from Fortune sure,
From Love and Laura have I for my grief.
I live in hope alone, remembering still
How by long fall of small drops I have seen
Marble and solid stone that worn have been.
No heart there is so hard, so cold no will,
By true tears, fervent prayers, and faithful love
That will not deign at length to melt and move.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET CCXXVII.

Signor mio caro, ogni pensier mi tira.

HE LAMENTS HIS ABSENCE FROM LAURA AND COLONNA, THE ONLY OBJECTS OF HIS AFFECTION.

My lord and friend! thoughts, wishes, all inclined
My heart to visit one so dear to me,
But Fortune—can she ever worse decree?—
Held me in hand, misled, or kept behind.
Since then the dear desire Love taught my mind
But leads me to a death I did not see,
And while my twin lights, wheresoe'er I be,
Are still denied, by day and night I've pined.
Affection for my lord, my lady's love,
The bonds have been wherewith in torments long
I have been bound, which round myself I wove.
A Laurel green, a Column fair and strong,
This for three lustres, that for three years more
In my fond breast, nor wish'd it free, I bore.

MACGREGOR.

TO LAURA IN DEATH.

SONNET I.

Oimè il bel viso! oimè il soave sguardo!

ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE DEATH OF LAURA.

Woe for the 'witching look of that fair face!
The port, where ease with dignity combined!
Woe for those accents, that each savage mind
To softness tuned, to noblest thoughts the base!
And the sweet smile, from whence the dart I trace,
Which now leaves death my only hope behind!
Exalted soul, most fit on thrones to 've shined,
But that too late she came this earth to grace!
For you I still must burn, and breathe in you;
For I was ever yours; of you bereft,
Full little now I reck all other care.
With hope and with desire you thrill'd me through,
When last my only joy on earth I left:—
But caught by winds each word was lost in air.

Anon., Ox., 1795.

Alas! that touching glance, that beauteous face!
Alas! that dignity with sweetness fraught!
Alas! that speech which tamed the wildest thought!
That roused the coward, glory to embrace!
Alas! that smile which in me did encase
That fatal dart, whence here I hope for nought—
Oh! hadst thou earlier our regions sought,
The world had then confess'd thy sovereign grace!
In thee I breathed, life's flame was nursed by thee,
For I was thine; and since of thee bereaved,

SELVA PIANA, NEAR PARMA.

Each other woe hath lost its venom'd sting:
My soul's blest joy! when last thy voice on me
In music fell, my heart sweet hope conceived;
Alas! thy words have sped on zephyrs' wings! WOLLASTON.

CANZONE I.

Che debb' io far? che mi consigli, Amore?

HE ASKS COUNSEL OF LOVE, WHETHER HE SHOULD FOLLOW LAURA, OR STILL ENDURE EXISTENCE.

WHAT should I do? what, Love, dost thou advise?
Full time it is to die:
And longer than I wish have I delay'd.
My mistress is no more, and with her gone my heart;
To follow her, I must need
Break short the course of my afflictive years:
To view her here below
I ne'er can hope; and irksome 'tis to wait.
Since that my every joy
By her departure unto tears is turn'd,
Of all its sweets my life has been deprived.

Thou, Love, dost feel, therefore to thee I plain,
How grievous is my loss;
I know my sorrows grieve and weigh thee down,
E'en as our common cause: for on one rock
We both have wreck'd our bark;
And in one instant was its sun obscured.
What genius can with words
Rightly describe my lamentable state?
Ah, blind, ungrateful world!
Thou hast indeed just cause with me to mourn;
That beauty thou didst hold with her is fled!

Fall'n is thy glory, and thou seest it not;
Unworthy thou with her,
While here she dwelt, acquaintance to maintain,
Or to be trodden by her saintly feet;
For that, which is so fair,
Should with its presence decorate the skies.
But I, a wretch who, reft
Of her, prize nor myself nor mortal life,

Recall her with my tears:
This only of my hope's vast sum remains;
And this alone doth still support me here.

Ah, me! her charming face is earth become,
Which wont unto our thought
To picture heaven and happiness above!
Her viewless form inhabits paradise,
Divested of that veil,
Which shadow'd while below her bloom of life,
Once more to put it on,
And never then to cast it off again;
When so much more divine,
And glorious render'd, 'twill by us be view'd,
As mortal beauty to eternal yields.

More bright than ever, and a lovelier fair,
Before me she appears,
Where most she's conscious that her sight will please.
This is one pillar that sustains my life;
The other her dear name,
That to my heart sounds so delightfully.
But tracing in my mind,
That she who form'd my choicest hope is dead
E'en in her blossom'd prime;
Thou knowest, Love, full well what I become:
She I trust sees it too, who dwells with truth.

Ye sweet associates, who admired her charms,
Her life angelical,
And her demeanour heavenly upon earth
For me lament, and be by pity wrought
No wise for her, who, risen
To so much peace, me has in warfare left;
Such, that should any shut
The road to follow her, for some length of time,
What Love declares to me
Alone would check my cutting through the tie;
But in this guise he reasons from within:

"The mighty grief transporting thee restrain;
For passions uncontroll'd
Forfeit that heaven, to which thy soul aspires,
Where she is living whom some fancy dead;

While at her fair remains
She smiles herself, sighing for thee alone;
And that her fame, which lives
In many a clime hymn'd by thy tongue, may ne'er
Become extinct, she prays;
But that her name should harmonize thy voice;
If e'er her eyes were lovely held, and dear."
Fly the calm, green retreat;
And ne'er approach where song and laughter dwell,
O strain; but wail be thine!
It suits thee ill with the glad throng to stay,
Thou sorrowing widow wrapp'd in garb of woe. NOTT.

SONNET II.

Rotta è l' alta Colonna e 'l verde Lauro.

HE BEWAILS HIS DOUBLE LOSS IN THE DEATHS OF LAURA, AND OF COLONNA.

FALL'N that proud Column, fall'n that Laurel tree,
Whose shelter once relieved my wearied mind;
I'm reft of what I ne'er again shall find,
Though ransack'd every shore and every sea:
Double the treasure death has torn from me,
In which life's pride was with its pleasure join'd;
Not eastern gems, nor the world's wealth combined,
Can give it back, nor land, nor royalty.
But, if so fate decrees, what can I more,
Than with unceasing tears these eyes bedew,
Abase my visage, and my lot deplore?
Ah, what is life, so lovely to the view!
How quickly in one little morn is lost
What years have won with labour and with cost! NOTT.

MY laurell'd hope! and thou, Colonna proud!
Your broken strength can shelter me no more!
Nor Boreas, Auster, Indus, Afric's shore,
Can give me that, whose loss my soul hath bow'd:
My step exulting, and my joy avow'd,
Death now hath quench'd with ye, my heart's twin store;
Nor earth's high rule, nor gems, nor gold's bright ore,
Can e'er bring back what once my heart endow'd.

But if this grief my destiny hath will'd,
What else can I oppose but tearful eyes,
A sorrowing bosom, and a spirit quell'd?
O life! whose vista seems so brightly fill'd,
A sunny breath, and that exhaling, dies
The hope, oft, many watchful years have swell'd.

WOLLASTON.

CANZONE II.

Amor, se vuoi ch' i' torni al giogo antico.

UNLESS LOVE CAN RESTORE HER TO LIFE, HE WILL NEVER AGAIN BE HIS SLAVE.

IF thou wouldst have me, Love, thy slave again,
One other proof, miraculous and new,
Must yet be wrought by you,
Ere, conquer'd, I resume my ancient chain—
Lift my dear love from earth which hides her now,
For whose sad loss thus beggar'd I remain;
Once more with warmth endow
That wise chaste heart where wont my life to dwell;
And if, as some divine, thy influence so,
From highest heaven unto the depths of hell,
Prevail in sooth—for what its scope below,
'Mid us of common race,
Methinks each gentle breast may answer well—
Rob Death of his late triumph, and replace
Thy conquering ensign in her lovely face!

Relume on that fair brow the living light,
Which was my honour'd guide, and the sweet flame,
Though spent, which still the same
Kindles me now as when it burn'd most bright;
For thirsty hind with such desire did ne'er
Long for green pastures or the crystal brook,
As I for the dear look,
Whence I have borne so much, and—if aright
I read myself and passion—more must bear:
This makes me to one theme my thoughts thus bind,
An aimless wanderer where is pathway none,
With weak and wearied mind

Pursuing hopes which never can be won.
Hence to thy summons's answer I disdain,
Thine is no power beyond thy proper reign.

Give me again that gentle voice to hear,
As in my heart are heard its echoes still,
Which had in song the skill
Hate to disarm, rage soften, sorrow cheer,
To tranquillize each tempest of the mind,
And from dark lowering clouds to keep it clear;
Which sweetly then refined
And raised my verse where now it may not soar.
And, with desire that hope may equal vie,
Since now my mind is waked in strength, restore
Their proper business to my ear and eye,
Awanting which life must
All tasteless be and harder than to die.
Vainly with me to your old power you trust,
While my first love is shrouded still in dust.

Give her dear glance again to bless my sight,
Which, as the sun on snow, beam'd still for me;
Open each window bright
Where pass'd my heart whence no return can be;
Resume thy golden shafts, prepare thy bow,
And let me once more drink with old delight
Of that dear voice the sound,
Whence what love is I first was taught to know.
And, for the lures, which still I covet so,
Were rifest, richest there my soul that bound,
Waken to life her tongue, and on the breeze
Let her light silken hair,
Loosen'd by Love's own fingers, float at ease;
Do this, and I thy willing yoke will bear,
Else thy hope faileth my free will to snare.

Oh! never my gone heart those links of gold,
Artlessly negligent, or curl'd with grace,
Nor her enchanting face,
Sweetly severe, can captive cease to hold;
These, night and day, the amorous wish in me
Kept, more than laurel or than myrtle, green,
When, doff'd or donn'd, we see
Of fields the grass, of woods their leafy screen.

And since that Death so haughty stands and stern,
The bond now broken whence I fear'd to flee,
Nor thine the art, howe'er the world may turn,
To bind anew the chain,
What boots it, Love, old arts to try again?
Their day is pass'd: thy power, since lost the arms
Which were my terror once, no longer harms.

Thy arms were then her eyes, unrivall'd, whence
Live darts were freely shot of viewless flame;
No help from reason came,
For against Heaven avails not man's defence;
Thought, Silence, Feeling, Gaiety, Wit, Sense,
Modest demeanour, affable discourse,
In words of sweetest force
Whence every grosser nature gentle grew,
That angel air, humble to all and kind,
Whose praise, it needs not mine, from all we find;
Stood she, or sat, a grace which often threw
Doubt on the gazer's mind
To which the meed of highest praise was due—
O'er hardest hearts thy victory was sure,
With arms like these, which lost I am secure

The minds which Heaven abandons to thy reign,
Haply are bound in many times and ways,
But mine one only chain,
Its wisdom shielding me from more, obeys;
Yet freedom brings no joy, though that he burst.
Rather I mournful ask, "Sweet pilgrim mine,
Alas! what doom divine
Me earliest bound to life yet frees thee first:
God, who has snatch'd thee from the world so soon,
Only to kindle our desires, the boon
Of virtue, so complete and lofty, gave
Now, Love, I may deride
Thy future wounds, nor fear to be thy slave;
In vain thy bow is bent, its bolts fall wide,
When closed her brilliant eyes their virtue died.

"Death from thy every law my heart has freed;
She who my lady was is pass'd on high,
Leaving me free to count dull hours drag by,
To solitude and sorrow still decreed." MACGREGOR.

SONNET III.

L' ardente nodo ov' io fui, d' ora in ora.

ON THE DEATH OF ANOTHER LADY.

THAT burning toil, in which I once was caught,
While twice ten years and one I counted o'er,
Death has unloosed: like burden I ne'er bore:
That grief ne'er fatal proves I now am taught.
But Love, who to entangle me still sought,
Spread in the treacherous grass his net once more,
So fed the fire with fuel as before,
That my escape I hardly could have wrought.
And, but that my first woes experience gave,
Snarèd long since and kindled I had been,
And all the more, as I'm become less green:
My freedom death again has come to save,
And break my bond; that flame now fades, and fails,
'Gainst which nor force nor intellect prevails. NOTT.

SONNET IV.

La vita fugge, e non s' arresta un' ora.

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE ARE NOW ALIKE PAINFUL TO HIM.

LIFE passes quick, nor will a moment stay,
And death with hasty journeys still draws near;
And all the present joins my soul to tear,
With every past and every future day:
And to look back or forward, so does prey
On this distracted breast, that sure I swear,
Did I not to myself some pity bear,
I were e'en now from all these thoughts away.
Much do I muse on what of pleasures past
This woe-worn heart has known; meanwhile, t' oppose
My passage, loud the winds around me roar.
I see my bliss in port, and torn my mast
And sails, my pilot faint with toil, and those
Fair lights, that wont to guide me, now no more.
ANON., OX., 1795.

LIFE ever flies with course that nought may stay,
Death follows after with gigantic stride;
Ills past and present on my spirit prey,
And future evils threat on every side:

Whether I backward look or forward fare,
A thousand ills my bosom's peace molest;
And were it not that pity bids me spare
My nobler part, I from these thoughts would rest.
If ever aught of sweet my heart has known,
Remembrance wakes its charms, while, tempest tost,
I mark the clouds that o'er my course still frown;
E'en in the port I see the storm afar;
Weary my pilot, mast and cable lost,
And set for ever my fair polar star. DACRE.

SONNET V.

Che fai? che pensi? che pur dietro guardi.

HE ENCOURAGES HIS SOUL TO LIFT ITSELF TO GOD, AND TO ABANDON THE VANITIES OF EARTH.

WHAT dost thou? think'st thou? wherefore bend thine eye
Back on the time that never shall return?
The raging fire, where once 'twas thine to burn,
Why with fresh fuel, wretched soul, supply?
Those thrilling tones, those glances of the sky,
Which one by one thy fond verse strove to adorn,
Are fled; and—well thou knowest, poor forlorn!—
To seek them here were bootless industry.
Then toil not bliss so fleeting to renew;
To chase a thought so fair, so faithless, cease:
Thou rather that unwavering good pursue,
Which guides to heaven; since nought below can please.
Fatal for us that beauty's torturing view,
Living or dead alike which desolates our peace. WRANGHAM.

SONNET VI.

Datemi pace, o duri miei pensieri.

HE COMPARES HIMSELF TO A BESIEGED CITY, AND ACCUSES HIS OWN HEART OF TREASON.

O TYRANT thoughts, vouchsafe me some repose!
Sufficeth not that Love, and Death, and Fate,
Make war all round me to my very gate,
But I must in me armèd hosts enclose?

And thou, my heart, to me alone that shows
Disloyal still, what cruel guides of late
In thee find shelter, now the chosen mate
Of my most mischievous and bitter foes?
Love his most secret embassies in thee,
In thee her worst results hard Fate explains,
And Death the memory of that blow, to me
Which shatters all that yet of hope remains;
In thee vague thoughts themselves with error arm,
And thee alone I blame for all my harm. MACGREGOR.

SONNET VII.

Occhi miei, oscurato è 'l nostro sole.

HE ENDEAVOURS TO FIND PEACE IN THE THOUGHT THAT SHE IS IN HEAVEN.

MINE eyes! our glorious sun is veil'd in night,
Or set to us, to rise 'mid realms of love;
There we may hail it still, and haply prove
It mourn'd that we delay'd our heavenward flight.
Mine ears! the music of her tones delight
Those, who its harmony can best approve;
My feet! who in her track so joy'd to move,
Ye cannot penetrate her regions bright!
But wherefore should your wrath on me descend?
No spell of mine hath hush'd for ye the joy
Of seeing, hearing, feeling, she was near:
Go, war with Death—yet, rather let us bend
To Him who can create—who can destroy—
And bids the ready smile succeed the tear. WOLLASTON.

O MY sad eyes! our sun is overcast,—
Nay, rather borne to heaven, and there is shining,
Waiting our coming, and perchance repining
At our delay; there shall we meet at last:
And there, mine ears, her angel words float past,
Those who best understand their sweet divining;
Howe'er, my feet, unto the search inclining,
Ye cannot reach her in those regions vast.
Why, then, do ye torment me thus, for, oh!
It is no fault of mine, that ye no more

Behold, and hear, and welcome her below;
Blame Death,—or rather praise Him and adore,
Who binds and frees, restrains and letteth go,
And to the weeping one can joy restore.

WROTTESLEY.

SONNET VIII.

Poichè la vista angelica serena.

WITH HER, HIS ONLY SOLACE, IS TAKEN AWAY ALL HIS DESIRE OF LIFE.

SINCE her calm angel face, long beauty's fane,
My beggar'd soul by this brief parting throws
In darkest horrors and in deepest woes,
I seek by uttering to allay my pain.
Certes, just sorrow leads me to complain:
This she, who is its cause, and Love too shows;
No other remedy my poor heart knows
Against the troubles that in life obtain.
Death! thou hast snatch'd her hence with hand unkind,
And thou, glad Earth! that fair and kindly face
Now hidest from me in thy close embrace;
Why leave me here, disconsolate and blind,
Since she who of mine eyes the light has been,
Sweet, loving, bright, no more with me is seen?

MACGREGOR.

SONNET IX.

S' Amor novo consiglio non n' apporta.

HE DESCRIBES HIS SAD STATE.

IF Love to give new counsel still delay,
My life must change to other scenes than these;
My troubled spirit grief and terror freeze,
Desire augments while all my hopes decay.
Thus ever grows my life, by night and day,
Despondent, and dismay'd, and ill at ease,
Harass'd and helmless on tempestuous seas,
With no sure escort on a doubtful way.
Her path a sick imagination guides,
Its true light underneath—ah, no! on high,
Whence on my heart she beams more bright than aye,
Not on mine eyes; from them a dark veil hides
Those lovely orbs, and makes me, ere life's span
Is measured half, an old and broken man. MACGREGOR.

SONNET X.

Nell' età sua più bella e più fiorita.

HE DESIRES TO DIE, THAT HIS SOUL MAY BE WITH HER, AS HIS THOUGHTS ALREADY ARE.

E'EN in youth's fairest flower, when Love's dear sway
Is wont with strongest power our hearts to bind,
Leaving on earth her fleshly veil behind,
My life, my Laura, pass'd from me away;
Living, and fair, and free from our vile clay,
From heaven she rules supreme my willing mind:
Alas! why left me in this mortal rind
That first of peace, of sin that latest day?
As my fond thoughts her heavenward path pursue,
So may my soul glad, light, and ready be
To follow her, and thus from troubles flee.
Whate'er delays me as worst loss I rue:
Time makes me to myself but heavier grow:
Death had been sweet to-day three years ago!

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XI.

Se lamentar augelli, o verdi fronde.

SHE IS EVER PRESENT TO HIM.

IF the lorn bird complain, or rustling sweep
Soft summer airs o'er foliage waving slow,
Or the hoarse brook come murmuring down the steep,
Where on the enamell'd bank I sit below
With thoughts of love that bid my numbers flow;
'Tis then I see her, though in earth she sleep!
Her, form'd in heaven! I see, and hear, and know!
Responsive sighing, weeping as I weep:
"Alas," she pitying says, "ere yet the hour,
Why hurry life away with swifter flight?
Why from thy eyes this flood of sorrow pour?
No longer mourn my fate! through death my days
Become eternal! to eternal light
These eyes, which seem'd in darkness closed, I raise!"

DACRE.

WHERE the green leaves exclude the summer beam,
And softly bend as balmy breezes blow,
And where with liquid lapse the lucid stream
Across the fretted rock is heard to flow,
Pensive I lay: when she whom earth conceals
As if still living to my eye appears;
And pitying Heaven her angel form reveals
To say, "Unhappy Petrarch, dry your tears.
Ah! why, sad lover, thus before your time
In grief and sadness should your life decay,
And, like a blighted flower, your manly prime
In vain and hopeless sorrow fade away?
Ah! yield not thus to culpable despair;
But raise thine eyes to heaven and think I wait thee there!"

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

MOVED by the summer wind when all is still,
The light leaves quiver on the yielding spray;
Sighs from its flowery bank the lucid rill,
While the birds answer in their sweetest lay.
Vain to this sickening heart these scenes appear:
No form but hers can meet my tearful eyes;
In every passing gale her voice I hear;
It seems to tell me, "I have heard thy sighs.
But why," she cries, "in manhood's towering prime,
In grief's dark mist thy days, inglorious, hide?
Ah! dost thou murmur, that my span of time
Has join'd eternity's unchanging tide?
Yes, though I seem'd to shut mine eyes in night,
They only closed to wake in everlasting light!"

ANNE BANNERMAN.

SONNET XII.

Mai non fu' in parte ove sì chiar' vedessi.

VAUCLUSE.

NOWHERE before could I so well have seen
Her whom my soul most craves since lost to view;
Nowhere in so great freedom could have been
Breathing my amorous lays 'neath skies so blue;
Never with depths of shade so calm and green
A valley found for lover's sigh more true;

Methinks a spot so lovely and serene
Love not in Cyprus nor in Gnidos knew.
All breathes one spell, all prompts and prays that I
Like them should love—the clear sky, the calm hour,
Winds, waters, birds, the green bough, the gay flower—
But thou, beloved, who call'st me from on high,
By the sad memory of thine early fate,
Pray that I hold the world and these sweet snares in hate.

MACGREGOR.

NEVER till now so clearly have I seen
Her whom my eyes desire, my soul still views;
Never enjoy'd a freedom thus serene;
Ne'er thus to heaven breathed my enamour'd muse,
As in this vale sequester'd, darkly green;
Where my soothed heart its pensive thought pursues,
And nought intrusively may intervene,
And all my sweetly-tender sighs renews.
To Love and meditation, faithful shade,
Receive the breathings of my grateful breast!
Love not in Cyprus found so sweet a nest
As this, by pine and arching laurel made!
The birds, breeze, water, branches, whisper love;
Herb, flower, and verdant path the lay symphonious move.

CAPEL LOFFT.

SONNET XIII.

Quante fiate al mio dolce ricetto.

HER FORM STILL HAUNTS HIM IN SOLITUDE.

How oft, all lonely, to my sweet retreat
From man and from myself I strive to fly,
Bathing with dewy eyes each much-loved seat,
And swelling every blossom with a sigh!
How oft, deep musing on my woes complete,
Along the dark and silent glens I lie,
In thought again that dearest form to meet
By death possess'd, and therefore wish to die!
How oft I see her rising from the tide
Of Sorga, like some goddess of the flood;
Or pensive wander by the river's side;
Or tread the flowery mazes of the wood;
Bright as in life; while angel pity throws
O'er her fair face the impress of my woes.

MERIVALE.

SONNET XIV.

Alma felice, che sovente torni.

HE THANKS HER THAT FROM TIME TO TIME SHE RETURNS TO CONSOLE HIM WITH HER PRESENCE.

O BLESSED spirit! who dost oft return;
Ministering comfort to my nights of woe,
From eyes which Death, relenting in his blow,
Has lit with all the lustres of the morn:
How am I gladden'd, that thou dost not scorn
O'er my dark days thy radiant beam to throw!
Thus do I seem again to trace below
Thy beauties, hovering o'er their loved sojourn.
There now, thou seest, where long of thee had been
My sprightlier strain, of thee my plaint I swell—
Of thee!—oh, no! of mine own sorrows keen!
One only solace cheers the wretched scene:
By many a sign I know thy coming well—
Thy step, thy voice and look, and robe of favour'd green.

WRANGHAM.

WHEN welcome slumber locks my torpid frame,
I see thy spirit in the midnight dream;
Thine eyes that still in living lustre beam:
In all but frail mortality the same.
Ah! then, from earth and all its sorrows free,
Methinks I meet thee in each former scene:
Once the sweet shelter of a heart serene;
Now vocal only while I weep for thee.
For thee!—ah, no! From human ills secure,
Thy hallow'd soul exults in endless day;
'Tis I who linger on the toilsome way:
No balm relieves the anguish I endure;
Save the fond feeble hope that thou art near
To soothe my sufferings with an angel's tear.

ANNE BANNERMAN.

SONNET XV.

Discolorato hai, Morte, il più bel volto.

HER PRESENCE IN VISIONS IS HIS ONLY CONSOLATION.

DEATH, thou of fairest face hast 'reft the hue,
And quench'd in deep thick night the brightest eyes,

And loosed from all its tenderest, closest ties
A spirit to faith and ardent virtue true.
In one short hour to all my bliss adieu!
Hush'd are those accents worthy of the skies,
Unearthly sounds, whose loss awakes my sighs;
And all I hear is grief, and all I view.
Yet oft, to soothe this lone and anguish'd heart,
By pity led, she comes my couch to seek,
Nor find I other solace here below:
And if her thrilling tones my strain could speak
And look divine, with Love's enkindling dart
Not man's sad breast alone, but fiercest beasts should glow.
WRANGHAM.

THOU hast despoil'd the fairest face e'er seen—
Thou hast extinguish'd, Death, the brightest eyes,
And snapp'd the cord in sunder of the ties
Which bound that spirit brilliantly serene:
In one short moment all I love has been
Torn from me, and dark silence now supplies
Those gentle tones; my heart, which bursts with sighs,
Nor sight nor sound from weariness can screen:
Yet doth my lady, by compassion led,
Return to solace my unfailing woe;
Earth yields no other balm:—oh! could I tell
How bright she seems, and how her accents flow,
Not unto man alone Love's flames would spread,
But even bears and tigers share the spell. WROTTES

SONNET XVI.

Si breve è 'l tempo e 'l pensier sì veloce.

THE REMEMBRANCE OF HER CHASES SADNESS FROM HIS HEART.

So brief the time, so fugitive the thought
Which Laura yields to me, though dead, again,
Small medicine give they to my giant pain;
Still, as I look on her, afflicts me nought.
Love, on the rack who holds me as he brought,
Fears when he sees her thus my soul retain,
Where still the seraph face and sweet voice reign,
Which first his tyranny and triumph wrought.

As rules a mistress in her home of right,
From my dark heavy heart her placid brow
Dispels each anxious thought and omen drear.
My soul, which bears but ill such dazzling light,
Says with a sigh: "O blessed day! when thou
Didst ope with those dear eyes thy passage here!"

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XVII.

Nè mai pietosa madre al caro figlio.

HER COUNSEL ALONE AFFORDS HIM RELIEF.

NE'ER did fond mother to her darling son,
Or zealous spouse to her belovèd mate,
Sage counsel give, in perilous estate,
With such kind caution, in such tender tone,
As gives that fair one, who, oft looking down
On my hard exile from her heavenly seat,
With wonted kindness bends upon my fate
Her brow, as friend or parent would have done:
Now chaste affection prompts her speech, now fear,
Instructive speech, that points what several ways
To seek or shun, while journeying here below;
Then all the ills of life she counts, and prays
My soul ere long may quit this terrene sphere:
And by her words alone I'm soothed and freed from woe.

NOTT

NE'ER to the son, in whom her age is blest,
The anxious mother—nor to her loved lord
The wedded dame, impending ill to ward,
With careful sighs so faithful counsel press'd,
As she, who, from her high eternal rest,
Bending—as though my exile she deplored—
With all her wonted tenderness restored,
And softer pity on her brow impress'd!
Now with a mother's fears, and now as one
Who loves with chaste affection, in her speech
She points what to pursue and what to shun!
Our years retracing of long, various grief,
Wooing my soul at higher good to reach,
And while she speaks, my bosom finds relief!

DACRE.

SONNET XVIII.

Se quell' aura soave de' sospiri.

SHE RETURNS IN PITY TO COMFORT HIM WITH HER ADVICE.

If that soft breath of sighs, which, from above,
I hear of her so long my lady here,
Who, now in heaven, yet seems, as of our sphere,
To breathe, and move, to feel, and live, and love,
I could but paint, my passionate verse should move
Warmest desires; so jealous, yet so dear
O'er me she bends and breathes, without a fear,
That on the way I tire, or turn, or rove.
She points the path on high: and I who know
Her chaste anxiety and earnest prayer,
In whispers sweet, affectionate, and low,
Train, at her will, my acts and wishes there:
And find such sweetness in her words alone
As with their power should melt the hardest stone.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XIX.

Sennuccio mio, benchè doglioso e solo.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS FRIEND SENNUCCIO.

O FRIEND! though left a wretched pilgrim here,
By thee though left in solitude to roam,
Yet can I mourn that thou hast found thy home,
On angel pinions borne, in bright career?
Now thou behold'st the ever-turning sphere,
And stars that journey round the concave dome;
Now thou behold'st how short of truth we come,
How blind our judgment, and thine own how clear!
That thou art happy soothes my soul oppress'd.
O friend! salute from me the laurell'd band,
Guitton and Cino, Dante, and the rest:
And tell my Laura, friend, that here I stand,
Wasting in tears, scarce of myself possess'd,
While her blest beauties all my thoughts command.

MOREHEAD.

SENNUCCIO mine! I yet myself console,
Though thou hast left me, mournful and alone,
For eagerly to heaven thy spirit has flown,

Free from the flesh which did so late enrol;
Thence, at one view, commands it either pole,
The planets and their wondrous courses known,
And human sight how brief and doubtful shown;
Thus with thy bliss my sorrow I control.
One favour—in the third of those bright spheres,
Guido and Dante, Cino, too, salute,
With Franceschin and all that tuneful train,
And tell my lady how I live, in tears,
(Savage and lonely as some forest brute)
Her sweet face and fair works when memory brings again.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XX.

I' ho pien di sospir quest' aer tutto.

VAUCLUSE HAS BECOME TO HIM A SCENE OF PAIN.

To every sound, save sighs, this air is mute,
When from rude rocks, I view the smiling land
Where she was born, who held my life in hand
From its first bud till blossoms turn'd to fruit:
To heaven she's gone, and I'm left destitute
To mourn her loss, and cast around in pain
These wearied eyes, which, seeking her in vain
Where'er they turn, o'erflow with grief acute;
There's not a root or stone amongst these hills,
Nor branch nor verdant leaf 'midst these soft glades,
Nor in the valley flowery herbage grows,
Nor liquid drop the sparkling fount distils,
Nor savage beast that shelters in these shades,
But knows how sharp my grief—how deep my woes.

WROTTESLEY.

SONNET XXI.

L' alma mia fiamma oltra le belle bella.

HE ACKNOWLEDGES THE WISDOM OF HER PAST COLDNESS TO HIM.

My noble flame—more fair than fairest are
Whom kind Heaven here has e'er in favour shown—
Before her time, alas for me! has flown
To her celestial home and parent star.

I seem but now to wake; wherein a bar
She placed on passion 'twas for good alone,
As, with a gentle coldness all her own,
She waged with my hot wishes virtuous war.
My thanks on her for such wise care I press,
That with her lovely face and sweet disdain
She check'd my love and taught me peace to gain.
O graceful artifice! deserved success!
I with my fond verse, with her bright eyes she,
Glory in her, she virtue got in me. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXII.

Come va 'l mondo! or mi diletta e piace.

HE BLESSES LAURA FOR HER VIRTUE.

How goes the world! now please me and delight
What most displeased me: now I see and feel
My trials were vouchsafed me for my weal,
That peace eternal should brief war requite.
O hopes and wishes, ever fond and slight,
In lovers most, which oftener harm than heal!
Worse had she yielded to my warm appeal
Whom Heaven has welcomed from the grave's dark night.
But blind love and my dull mind so misled,
I sought to trespass even by main force
Where to have won my precious soul were dead.
Blessèd be she who shaped mine erring course
To better port, by turns who curb'd and lured
My bold and passionate will where safety was secured.
MACGREGOR.

ALAS! this changing world! my present joy
Was once my grief's dark source, and now I feel
My sufferings pass'd were but my soul to heal
Its fearful warfare—peace's soft decoy.
Poor human wishes! Hope, thou fragile toy
To lovers oft! my woe had met its seal,
Had she but hearken'd to my love's appeal,
Who, throned in heaven, hath fled this world's alloy.

My blinded love, and yet more stubborn mind,
Resistless urged me to my bosom's shame,
And where my soul's destruction I had met:
But blessèd she who bade life's current find
A holier course, who still'd my spirit's flame
With gentle hope that soul might triumph yet.

WOLLASTON.

SONNET XXIII.

Quand' io veggio dal ciel scender l'Aurora.

MORN RENDERS HIS GRIEF MORE POIGNANT.

WHEN from the heavens I see Aurora beam,
With rosy-tinctured cheek and golden hair,
Love bids my face the hue of sadness wear:
"There Laura dwells!" I with a sigh exclaim.
Thou knowest well the hour that shall redeem,
Happy Tithonus, thy much-valued fair;
But not to her I love can I repair,
Till death extinguishes this vital flame.
Yet need'st thou not thy separation mourn;
Certain at evening's close is the return
Of her, who doth not thy hoar locks despise;
But my nights sad, my days are render'd drear,
By her, who bore my thoughts to yonder skies,
And only a remember'd name left here.

NOTT.

WHEN from the east appears the purple ray
Of morn arising, and salutes the eyes
That wear the night in watching for the day,
Thus speaks my heart: "In yonder opening skies,
In yonder fields of bliss, my Laura lies!"
Thou sun, that know'st to wheel thy burning car,
Each eve, to the still surface of the deep,
And there within thy Thetis' bosom sleep;
Oh! could I thus my Laura's presence share,
How would my patient heart its sorrows bear!
Adored in life, and honour'd in the dust,
She that in this fond breast for ever reigns
Has pass'd the gulph of death!—To deck that bust,
No trace of her but the sad name remains.

WOODHOUSELEE.

SONNET XXIV.

Gli occhi di ch' io parlai sì caldamente.

HIS LYRE IS NOW ATTUNED ONLY TO WOE.

THE eyes, the face, the limbs of heavenly mould,
So long the theme of my impassion'd lay,
Charms which so stole me from myself away,
That strange to other men the course I hold;
The crispèd locks of pure and lucid gold,
The lightning of the angelic smile, whose ray
To earth could all of paradise convey,
A little dust are now!—to feeling cold!
And yet I live!—but that I live bewail,
Sunk the loved light that through the tempest led
My shatter'd bark, bereft of mast and sail:
Hush'd be for aye the song that breathed love's fire!
Lost is the theme on which my fancy fed,
And turn'd to mourning my once tuneful lyre. DACRE.

THE eyes, the arms, the hands, the feet, the face,
Which made my thoughts and words so warm and wild,
That I was almost from myself exiled,
And render'd strange to all the human race;
The lucid locks that curl'd in golden grace,
The lightening beam that, when my angel smiled,
Diffused o'er earth an Eden heavenly mild;
What are they now? Dust, lifeless dust, alas!
And I live on, a melancholy slave,
Toss'd by the tempest in a shatter'd bark,
Reft of the lovely light that cheer'd the wave.
The flame of genius, too, extinct and dark,
Here let my lays of love conclusion have;
Mute be the lyre: tears best my sorrows mark.
MOREHEAD.

THOSE eyes whose living lustre shed the heat
Of bright meridian day; the heavenly mould
Of that angelic form; the hands, the feet,
The taper arms, the crispèd locks of gold;
Charms that the sweets of paradise enfold;
The radiant lightning of her angel-smile,
And every grace that could the sense beguile
Are now a pile of ashes, deadly cold!

And yet I bear to drag this cumbrous chain,
That weighs my soul to earth—to bliss or pain
Alike insensible:—her anchor lost,
The frail dismantled bark, all tempest-toss'd,
Surveys no port of comfort—closed the scene
Of life's delusive joys;—and dry the Muse's vein.

WOODHOUSELEE.

THOSE eyes, sweet subject of my rapturous strain!
The arms, the hands, the feet, that lovely face,
By which I from myself divided was,
And parted from the vulgar and the vain;
Those crispèd locks, pure gold unknown to stain!
Of that angelic smile the lightening grace,
Which wont to make this earth a heavenly place!
Dissolved to senseless ashes now remain!
And yet I live, to endless grief a prey,
'Reft of that star, my loved, my certain guide,
Disarm'd my bark, while tempests round me blow!
Stop, then, my verse—dry is the fountain's tide
That fed my genius! Cease, my amorous lay!
Changed is my lyre, attuned to endless woe! CHARLEMONT

SONNET XXV.

S' io avessi pensato che sì care.

HIS POEMS WERE WRITTEN ONLY TO SOOTHE HIS OWN GRIEF: OTHERWISE HE WOULD HAVE LABOURED TO MAKE THEM MORE DESERVING OF THE FAME THEY HAVE ACQUIRED.

HAD I e'er thought that to the world so dear
The echo of my sighs would be in rhyme,
I would have made them in my sorrow's prime
Rarer in style, in number more appear.
Since she is dead my muse who prompted here,
First in my thoughts and feelings at all time,
All power is lost of tender or sublime
My rough dark verse to render soft and clear.
And certes, my sole study and desire
Was but—I knew not how—in those long years
To unburthen my sad heart, not fame acquire.
I wept, but wish'd no honour in my tears.
Fain would I now taste joy; but that high fair,
Silent and weary, calls me to her there. MACGREGOR.

Oh! had I deem'd my sighs, in numbers rung,
Could e'er have gain'd the world's approving smile,
I had awoke my rhymes in choicer style,
My sorrow's birth more tunefully had sung:
But she is gone whose inspiration hung
On all my words, and did my thoughts beguile;
My numbers harsh seem'd melody awhile,
Now she is mute who o'er them music flung.
Nor fame, nor other incense, then I sought,
But how to quell my heart's o'erwhelming grief;
I wept, but sought no honour in my tear:
But could the world's fair suffrage now be bought,
'Twere joy to gain, but that my hour is brief,
Her lofty spirit waves me to her bier. WOLLASTON.

SONNET XXVI.

Soleasi nel mio cor star bella e viva.

SINCE HER DEATH, NOTHING IS LEFT TO HIM BUT GRIEF.

She stood within my heart, warm, young, alone,
As in a humble home a lady bright;
By her last flight not merely am I grown
Mortal, but dead, and she an angel quite.
A soul whence every bliss and hope is flown,
Love shorn and naked of its own glad light,
Might melt with pity e'en a heart of stone:
But none there is to tell their grief or write;
These plead within, where deaf is every ear
Except mine own, whose power its griefs so mar
That nought is left me save to suffer here.
Verily we but dust and shadows are!
Verily blind and evil is our will!
Verily human hopes deceive us still! MACGREGOR.

'Mid life's bright glow she dwelt within my soul,
The sovereign tenant of a humble cell,
But when for heaven she bade the world farewell,
Death seem'd to grasp me in his fierce control:
My wither'd love torn from its brightening goal—
My soul without its treasure doom'd to dwell—
Could I but trace their grief, their sorrow tell,
A stone might wake, and fain with them condole.

They inly mourn, where none can hear their woe
Save I alone, who too with grief oppress'd,
Can only soothe my anguish by my sighs:
Life is indeed a shadowy dream below;
Our blind desires by Reason's chain unbless'd,
Whilst Hope in treacherous wither'd fragments lies.

WOLLASTON.

SONNET XXVII.

Soleano i miei pensier soavemente.

HE COMFORTS HIMSELF WITH THE HOPE THAT SHE HEARS HIM.

My thoughts in fair alliance and array
Hold converse on the theme which most endears:
Pity approaches and repents delay:
E'en now she speaks of us, or hopes, or fears.
Since the last day, the terrible hour when Fate
This present life of her fair being reft,
From heaven, she sees, and hears, and feels our state:
No other hope than this to me is left.
O fairest miracle! most fortunate mind!
O unexampled beauty, stately, rare!
Whence lent too late, too soon, alas! rejoin'd.
Hers is the crown and palm of good deeds there,
Who to the world so eminent and clear
Made her great virtue and my passion here. MACGREGOR.

My thoughts were wont with sentiment so sweet
To meditate their object in my breast—
Perhaps her sympathies my wishes meet
With gentlest pity, seeing me distress'd:
Nor when removed to that her sacred rest
The present life changed for that blest retreat,
Vanish'd in air my former visions fleet,
My hopes, my tears, in vain to her address'd.
O lovely miracle! O favour'd mind!
Beauty beyond example high and rare,
So soon return'd from us to whence it came!
There the immortal wreaths her temples bind;
The sacred palm is hers: on earth so fair
Who shone by her own virtues and my flame.

CAPEL LOFFT.

SONNET XXVIII.

I' mi soglio accusare, ed or mi scuso.

HE GLORIES IN HIS LOVE.

I now excuse myself who wont to blame,
Nay, more, I prize and even hold me dear,
For this fair prison, this sweet-bitter shame,
Which I have borne conceal'd so many a year.
O envious Fates! that rare and golden frame
Rudely ye broke, where lightly twined and clear,
Yarn of my bonds, the threads of world-wide fame
Which lovely 'gainst his wont made Death appear.
For not a soul was ever in its days
Of joy, of liberty, of life so fond,
That would not change for her its natural ways,
Preferring thus to suffer and despond,
Than, fed by hope, to sing in others' praise,
Content to die, or live in such a bond. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXIX.

Due gran nemiche insieme erano aggiunte.

THE UNION OF BEAUTY AND VIRTUE IS DISSOLVED BY HER DEATH.

Two mortal foes in one fair breast combined,
Beauty and Virtue, in such peace allied
That ne'er rebellion ruffled that pure mind,
But in rare union dwelt they side by side;
By Death they now are shatter'd and disjoin'd;
One is in heaven, its glory and its pride,
One under earth, her brilliant eyes now blind,
Whence stings of love once issued far and wide.
That winning air, that rare discourse and meek,
Surely from heaven inspired, that gentle glance
Which wounded my poor heart, and wins it still,
Are gone; if I am slow her road to seek,
I hope her fair and graceful name perchance
To consecrate with this worn weary quill. MACGREGOR.

WITHIN one mortal shrine two foes had met—
Beauty and Virtue—yet they dwelt so bright,
That ne'er within the soul did they excite
Rebellious thought, their union might beget:

But, parted to fulfil great nature's debt,
One blooms in heaven, exulting in its height;
Its twin on earth doth rest, from whose veil'd night
No more those eyes of love man's soul can fret.
That speech by Heaven inspired, so humbly wise—
That graceful air—her look so winning, meek,
That woke and kindles still my bosom's pain—
They all have fled; but if to gain her skies
I tardy seem, my weary pen would seek
For her blest name a consecrated reign! WOLLASTON.

SONNET XXX.

Quand' io mi volgo indietro a mirar gli anni.

THE REMEMBRANCE OF THE PAST ENHANCES HIS MISERY.

WHEN I look back upon the many years
Which in their flight my best thoughts have entomb'd,
And spent the fire, that, spite her ice, consumed,
And finish'd the repose so full of tears,
Broken the faith which Love's young dream endears,
And the two parts of all my blessing doom'd,
This low in earth, while heaven has that resumed,
And lost the guerdon of my pains and fears,
I wake, and feel me to the bitter wind
So bare, I envy the worst lot I see;
Self-terror and heart-grief on me so wait.
O Death, O Fate, O Fortune, stars unkind!
O day for ever dark and drear to me!
How have ye sunk me in this abject state! MACGREGOR.

WHEN memory turns to gaze on time gone by
(Which in its flight hath arm'd e'en thought with wings),
And to my troubled rest a period brings,
Quells, too, the flame which long could ice defy;
And when I mark Love's promise wither'd lie,
That treasure parted which my bosom wrings
(For she in heaven, her shrine to nature clings),
Whilst thus my toils' reward she doth deny;—
I then awake, and feel bereaved indeed!
The darkest fate on earth seems bliss to mine—
So much I fear myself, and dread its woe!
O Fortune!—Death! O star! O fate decreed!

O bitter day! that yet must sweetly shine,
Alas! too surely thou hast laid me low! WOLLASTON.

SONNET XXXI.

Ov' è la fronte che con picciol cenno.

HE ENUMERATES AND EULOGISES THE GRACES OF LAURA.

WHERE is the brow whose gentlest beckonings led
My raptured heart at will, now here, now there?
Where the twin stars, lights of this lower sphere,
Which o'er my darkling path their radiance shed?
Where is true worth, and wit, and wisdom fled?
The courteous phrase, the melting accent, where?
Where, group'd in one rich form, the beauties rare,
Which long their magic influence o'er me shed?
Where is the shade, within whose sweet recess
My wearied spirit still forgot its sighs,
And all my thoughts their constant record found?
Where, where is she, my life's sole arbitress?—
Ah, wretched world! and wretched ye, mine eyes
(Of her pure light bereft) which aye with tears are drown'd.
WRANGHAM.

WHERE is that face, whose slightest air could move
My trembling heart, and strike the springs of love?
That heaven, where two fair stars, with genial ray,
Shed their kind influence on life's dim way?
Where are that science, sense, and worth confess'd?
That speech by virtue, by the graces dress'd?
Where are those beauties, where those charms combined,
That caused this long captivity of mind?
Where the dear shade of all that once was fair,
The source, the solace, of each amorous care—
My heart's sole sovereign, Nature's only boast?
—Lost to the world, to me for ever lost! LANGHORNE.

SONNET XXXII.

Quanta invidia ti porto, avara terra.

HE ENVIES EARTH, HEAVEN, AND DEATH THEIR POSSESSION OF HIS TREASURE.

O EARTH, whose clay-cold mantle shrouds that face,
And veils those eyes that late so brightly shone,

Whence all that gave delight on earth was known,
How much I envy thee that harsh embrace!
O heaven, that in thy airy courts confined
That purest spirit, when from earth she fled,
And sought the mansions of the righteous dead;
How envious, thus to leave my panting soul behind!
O angels, that in your seraphic choir
Received her sister-soul, and now enjoy
Still present, those delights without alloy,
Which my fond heart must still in vain desire!
In her I lived—in her my life decays;
Yet envious Fate denies to end my hapless days.

WOODHOUSELEE.

WHAT envy of the greedy earth I bear,
That holds from me within its cold embrace
The light, the meaning, of that angel face,
On which to gaze could soften e'en despair.
What envy of the saints, in realms so fair,
Who eager seem'd, from that bright form of grace,
The spirit pure to summon to its place,
Amidst those joys, which few can hope to share;
What envy of the blest in heaven above,
With whom she dwells in sympathies divine
Denied to me on earth, though sought in sighs;
And oh! what envy of stern Death I prove,
That with her life has ta'en the light of mine,
Yet calls me not,—though fixed and cold those eyes.

WROTTESLEY.

SONNET XXXIII.

Valle che d' lamenti miei se' piena.

ON HIS RETURN TO VAUCLUSE AFTER LAURA'S DEATH.

VALLEY, which long hast echoed with my cries;
Stream, which my flowing tears have often fed;
Beasts, fluttering birds, and ye who in the bed
Of Cabrieres' wave display your speckled dyes;
Air, hush'd to rest and soften'd by my sighs;
Dear path, whose mazes lone and sad I tread;
Hill of delight—though now delight is fled—
To rove whose haunts Love still my foot decoys;

Well I retain your old unchanging face!
Myself how changed! in whom, for joy's light throng,
Infinite woes their constant mansion find!
Here bloom'd my bliss: and I your tracks retrace,
To mark whence upward to her heaven she sprung,
Leaving her beauteous spoil, her robe of flesh behind!

WRANGHAM.

YE vales, made vocal by my plaintive lay;
Ye streams, embitter'd with the tears of love;
Ye tenants of the sweet melodious grove;
Ye tribes that in the grass-fringed streamlet play;
Ye tepid gales, to which my sighs convey
A softer warmth; ye flowery plains, that move
Reflection sad; ye hills, where yet I rove,
Since Laura there first taught my steps to stray;—
You, you are still the same! How changed, alas,
Am I! who, from a state of life so blest,
Am now the gloomy dwelling-place of woe!
'Twas here I saw my love: here still I trace
Her parting steps, when she her mortal vest
Cast to the earth, and left these scenes below. ANON.

SONNET XXXIV.

Levommi il mio pensier in parte ov' era.

SOARING IN IMAGINATION TO HEAVEN, HE MEETS LAURA, AND IS HAPPY.

FOND fancy raised me to the spot, where strays
She, whom I seek but find on earth no more:
There, fairer still and humbler than before,
I saw her, in the third heaven's blessèd maze.
She took me by the hand, and "Thou shalt trace,
If hope not errs," she said, "this happy shore:
I, I am she, thy breast with slights who tore,
And ere its evening closed my day's brief space.
What human heart conceives, my joys exceed:
Thee only I expect, and (what remain
Below) the charms, once objects of thy love."
Why ceased she? Ah! my captive hand why freed?
Such of her soft and hallow'd tones the chain,
From that delightful heaven my soul could scarcely move.

WRANGHAM.

THITHER my ecstatic thought had rapt me, where
She dwells, whom still on earth I seek in vain;
And there, with those whom the third heavens contain,
I saw her, much more kind, and much more fair.
My hand she took, and said: "Within this sphere,
If hope deceive me not, thou shalt again
With me reside: who caused thy mortal pain
Am I, and even in summer closed my year.
My bliss no human thought can understand:
Thee only I await; and, that erewhile
You held so dear, the veil I left behind."—
She ceased—ah why? Why did she loose my hand?
For oh! her hallow'd words, her roseate smile
In heaven had well nigh fix'd my ravish'd mind!

CHARLEMONT.

SONNET XXXV.

Amor che meco al buon tempo ti stavi.

HE VENTS HIS SORROW TO ALL WHO WITNESSED HIS FORMER FELICITY.

LOVE, that in happier days wouldst meet me here
Along these meads that nursed our kindred strains;
And that old debt to clear which still remains,
Sweet converse with the stream and me wouldst share:
Ye flowers, leaves, grass, woods, grots, rills, gentle air,
Low valleys, lofty hills, and sunny plains:
The harbour where I stored my love-sick pains,
And all my various chance, my racking care:
Ye playful inmates of the greenwood shade;
Ye nymphs, and ye that in the waves pursue
That life its cool and grassy bottom lends:—
My days were once so fair; now dark and dread
As death that makes them so. Thus the world through
On each as soon as born his fate attends.

ANON., Ox., 1795.

ON these green banks in happier days I stray'd
With Love, who whisper'd many a tender tale;
And the glad waters, winding through the dale,
Heard the sweet eloquence fond Love display'd.
You, purpled plain, cool grot, and arching glade;
Ye hills, ye streams, where plays the silken gale;

Ye pathless wilds, you rock-encircled vale,
Which oft have heard the tender plaints I made;
Ye blue-hair'd nymphs, who ceaseless revel keep,
In the cool bosom of the crystal deep;
Ye woodland maids who climb the mountain's brow;
Ye mark'd how joy once wing'd each hour so gay;
Ah, mark how sad each hour now wears away!
So fate with human bliss blends human woe! ANON. 1777.

SONNET XXXVI.

Mentre che 'l cor dagli amorosi vermi.

HAD SHE NOT DIED SO EARLY, HE WOULD HAVE LEARNED TO PRAISE HER MORE WORTHILY.

WHILE on my heart the worms consuming prey'd
Of Love, and I with all his fire was caught;
The steps of my fair wild one still I sought
To trace o'er desert mountains as she stray'd;
And much I dared in bitter strains to upbraid
Both Love and her, whom I so cruel thought;
But rude was then my genius, and untaught
My rhymes, while weak and new the ideas play'd.
Dead is that fire; and cold its ashes lie
In one small tomb; which had it still grown on
E'en to old age, as oft by others felt,
Arm'd with the power of rhyme, which wretched I
E'en now disclaim, my riper strains had won
E'en stones to burst, and in soft sorrows melt.

ANON., OX., 1795.

SONNET XXXVII.

Anima bella, da quel nodo sciolta.

HE PRAYS LAURA TO LOOK DOWN UPON HIM FROM HEAVEN.

BRIGHT spirit, from those earthly bonds released,
The loveliest ever wove in Nature's loom,
From thy bright skies compassionate the gloom
Shrouding my life that once of joy could taste!
Each false suggestion of thy heart has ceased,
That whilom bade thee stern disdain assume;

Now, all secure, heaven's habitant become,
List to my sighs, thy looks upon me cast.
Mark the huge rock, whence Sorga's waters rise;
And see amidst its waves and borders stray
One fed by grief and memory that ne'er dies:
But from that spot, oh! turn thy sight away
Where I first loved, where thy late dwelling lies;
That in thy friends thou nought ungrateful may'st survey!

NOTT.

BLEST soul, that, loosen'd from those bands, art flown—
Bands than which Nature never form'd more fair,
Look down and mark how changed to carking care
From gladdest thoughts I pass my days unknown.
Each false opinion from my heart is gone,
That once to me made thy sweet sight appear
Most harsh and bitter; now secure from fear
Here turn thine eyes, and listen to my moan.
Turn to this rock whence Sorga's waters rise,
And mark, where through the mead its waters flow,
One who of thee still mindful ceaseless sighs:
But leave me there unsought for, where to glow
Our flames began, and where thy mansion lies,
Lest thou in thine shouldst see what grieved thee so.

ANON., Ox., 1795.

SONNET XXXVIII.

Quel sol che mi mostrava il cammin destro.

LOVE AND HE SEEK LAURA, BUT FIND NO TRACES OF HER EXCEPT IN THE SKY.

THAT sun, which ever signall'd the right road,
Where flash'd her own bright feet, to heaven to fly,
Returning to the Eternal Sun on high,
Has quench'd my light, and cast her earthly load;
Thus, lone and weary, my oft steps have trode,
As some wild animal, the sere woods by,
Fleeing with heavy heart and downcast eye
The world which since to me a blank has show'd.
Still with fond search each well-known spot I pace
Where once I saw her: Love, who grieves me so,
My only guide, directs me where to go.

I find her not: her every sainted trace
Seeks, in bright realms above, her parent star
From grisly Styx and black Avernus far. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XXXIX.

Io pensava assai destro esser sull' ale.

UNWORTHY TO HAVE LOOKED UPON HER, HE IS STILL MORE SO TO ATTEMPT HER PRAISES.

I THOUGHT me apt and firm of wing to rise
(Not of myself, but him who trains us all)
In song, to numbers fitting the fair thrall
Which Love once fasten'd and which Death unties.
Slow now and frail, the task too sorely tries,
As a great weight upon a sucker small:
"Who leaps," I said, "too high may midway fall:
Man ill accomplishes what Heaven denies."
So far the wing of genius ne'er could fly—
Poor style like mine and faltering tongue much less—
As Nature rose, in that rare fabric, high.
Love follow'd Nature with such full success
In gracing her, no claim could I advance
Even to look, and yet was bless'd by chance. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XL.

Quella per cui con Sorga ho cangiat' Arno.

HE ATTEMPTS TO PAINT HER BEAUTIES, BUT NOT HER VIRTUES.

SHE, for whose sake fair Arno I resign,
And for free poverty court-affluence spurn,
Has known to sour the precious sweets to turn
On which I lived, for which I burn and pine.
Though since, the vain attempt has oft been mine
That future ages from my song should learn
Her heavenly beauties, and like me should burn,
My poor verse fails her sweet face to define.
The gifts, though all her own, which others share,
Which were but stars her bright sky scatter'd o'er,
Haply of these to sing e'en I might dare;
But when to the diviner part I soar,

To the dull world a brief and brilliant light,
Courage and wit and art are baffled quite. MACGREGOR.

SONNET XLI.

L' alto e novo miracol ch' a dì nostri.

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO DESCRIBE HER EXCELLENCES.

THE wonder, high and new, that, in our days,
Dawn'd on the world, yet would not there remain,
Which heaven but show'd to us to snatch again
Better to blazon its own starry ways;
That to far times I her should paint and praise
Love wills, who prompted first my passionate strain;
But now wit, leisure, pen, page, ink in vain
To the fond task a thousand times he sways.
My slow rhymes struggle not to life the while;
I feel it, and whoe'er to-day below,
Or speak or write of love will prove it so.
Who justly deems the truth beyond all style,
Here silent let him muse, and sighing say,
Blessèd the eyes who saw her living day! MACGREGOR.

SONNET XLII.

Zefiro torna, e 'l bel tempo rimena.

RETURNING SPRING BRINGS TO HIM ONLY INCREASE OF GRIEF.

ZEPHYR returns; and in his jocund train
Brings verdure, flowers, and days serenely clear;
Brings Progne's twitter, Philomel's lorn strain;
With every bloom that paints the vernal year;
Cloudless the skies, and smiling every plain;
With joyance flush'd, Jove views his daughter dear;
Love's genial power pervades earth, air, and main;
All beings join'd in fond accord appear.
But nought to me returns save sorrowing sighs,
Forced from my inmost heart by her who bore
Those keys which govern'd it unto the skies:
The blossom'd meads, the choristers of air,
Sweet courteous damsels can delight no more;
Each face looks savage, and each prospect drear. NOTT.

THE spring returns, with all her smiling train;
The wanton Zephyrs breathe along the bowers,
The glistening dew-drops hang on bending flowers,
And tender green light-shadows o'er the plain:
And thou, sweet Philomel, renew'st thy strain,
Breathing thy wild notes to the midnight grove:
All nature feels the kindling fire of love,
The vital force of spring's returning reign.
But not to me returns the cheerful spring!
O heart! that know'st no period to thy grief,
Nor Nature's smiles to thee impart relief,
Nor change of mind the varying seasons bring:
She, she is gone! All that e'er pleased before,
Adieu! ye birds ye flowers, ye fields, that charm no more!

WOODHOUSELEE.

RETURNING Zephyr the sweet season brings,
With flowers and herbs his breathing train among,
And Progne twitters, Philomela sings,
Leading the many-colour'd spring along;
Serene the sky, and fair the laughing field,
Jove views his daughter with complacent brow;
Earth, sea, and air, to Love's sweet influence yield,
And creatures all his magic power avow:
But nought, alas! for me the season brings,
Save heavier sighs, from my sad bosom drawn
By her who can from heaven unlock its springs;
And warbling birds and flower-bespangled lawn,
And fairest acts of ladies fair and mild,
A desert seem, and its brute tenants wild. DACRE.

ZEPHYR returns and winter's rage restrains,
With herbs, with flowers, his blooming progeny!
Now Progne prattles, Philomel complains,
And spring assumes her robe of various dye;
The meadows smile, heaven glows, nor Jove disdains
To view his daughter with delighted eye;
While Love through universal nature reigns,
And life is fill'd with amorous sympathy!
But grief, not joy, returns to me forlorn;
And sighs, which from my inmost heart proceed
For her, by whom to heaven its keys were borne.

The song of birds, the flower-enamell'd mead,
And graceful acts, which most the fair adorn,
A desert seem, and beasts of savage prey! CHARLEMONT.

SONNET XLIII.

Quel rosignuol che sì soave piagne.

THE SONG OF THE NIGHTINGALE REMINDS HIM OF HIS UNHAPPY LOT.

YON nightingale, whose bursts of thrilling tone,
Pour'd in soft sorrow from her tuneful throat,
Haply her mate or infant brood bemoan,
Filling the fields and skies with pity's note;
Here lingering till the long long night is gone,
Awakes the memory of my cruel lot—
But I my wretched self must wail alone:
Fool, who secure from death an angel thought!
O easy duped, who thus on hope relies!
Who would have deem'd the darkness, which appears,
From orbs more brilliant than the sun should rise?
Now know I, made by sad experience wise,
That Fate would teach me by a life of tears,
On wings how fleeting fast all earthly rapture flies!
WRANGHAM.

YON nightingale, whose strain so sweetly flows,
Mourning her ravish'd young or much-loved mate,
A soothing charm o'er all the valleys throws
And skies, with notes well tuned to her sad state:
And all the night she seems my kindred woes
With me to weep and on my sorrows wait;
Sorrows that from my own fond fancy rose,
Who deem'd a goddess could not yield to fate.
How easy to deceive who sleeps secure!
Who could have thought that to dull earth would turn
Those eyes that as the sun shone bright and pure?
Ah! now what Fortune wills I see full sure:
That loathing life, yet living I should see
How few its joys, how little they endure!
ANON., OX., 1795.

THAT nightingale, who now melodious mourns
Perhaps his children or his consort dear,
The heavens with sweetness fills; the distant bourns
Resound his notes, so piteous and so clear;

With me all night he weeps, and seems by turns
To upbraid me with my fault and fortune drear,
Whose fond and foolish heart, where grief sojourns,
A goddess deem'd exempt from mortal fear.
Security, how easy to betray!
The radiance of those eyes who could have thought
Should e'er become a senseless clod of clay?
Living, and weeping, late I've learn'd to say
That here below—Oh, knowledge dearly bought!—
Whate'er delights will scarcely last a day! CHARLEMONT.

SONNET XLIV.

Nè per sereno cielo ir vaghe stelle.

NOTHING THAT NATURE OFFERS CAN AFFORD HIM CONSOLATION.

NOT skies serene, with glittering stars inlaid,
Nor gallant ships o'er tranquil ocean dancing,
Nor gay careering knights in arms advancing,
Nor wild herds bounding through the forest glade,
Nor tidings new of happiness delay'd,
Nor poesie, Love's witchery enhancing,
Nor lady's song beside clear fountain glancing,
In beauty's pride, with chastity array'd;
Nor aught of lovely, aught of gay in show,
Shall touch my heart, now cold within her tomb
Who was erewhile my life and light below!
So heavy—tedious—sad—my days unblest,
That I, with strong desire, invoke Death's gloom,
Her to behold, whom ne'er to have seen were best!
DACRE.

NOR stars bright glittering through the cool still air,
Nor proud ships riding on the tranquil main,
Nor armèd knights light pricking o'er the plain,
Nor deer in glades disporting void of care,
Nor tidings hoped by recent messenger,
Nor tales of love in high and gorgeous strain,
Nor by clear stream, green mead, or shady lane
Sweet-chaunted roundelay of lady fair;
Nor aught beside my heart shall e'er engage—
Sepulchred, as 'tis henceforth doom'd to be,
With her, my eyes' sole mirror, beam, and bliss.
Oh! how I long this weary pilgrimage

To close; that I again that form may see,
Which never to have seen had been my happiness!

WRANGHAM.

SONNET XLV.

Passato è 'l tempo omai, lasso! che tanto.

HIS ONLY DESIRE IS AGAIN TO BE WITH HER.

FLED—fled, alas! for ever—is the day,
Which to my flame some soothing whilom brought;
And fled is she of whom I wept and wrote:
Yet still the pang, the tear, prolong their stay!
And fled that angel vision far away;
But flying, with soft glance my heart it smote
('Twas then my own), which straight, divided, sought
Her, who had wrapp'd it in her robe of clay.
Part shares her tomb, part to her heaven is sped;
Where now, with laurel wreathed, in triumph's car
She reaps the meed of matchless holiness:
So might I, of this flesh discumberèd,
Which holds me prisoner here, from sorrow far
With her expatiate free 'midst realms of endless bliss!

WRANGHAM.

AH! gone for ever are the happy years
That soothed my soul amid Love's fiercest fire,
And she for whom I wept and tuned my lyre
Has gone, alas!—But left my lyre, my tears:
Gone is that face, whose holy look endears;
But in my heart, ere yet it did retire,
Left the sweet radiance of its eyes, entire;—
My heart? Ah, no! not mine! for to the spheres
Of light she bore it captive, soaring high,
In angel robe triumphant, and now stands
Crown'd with the laurel wreath of chastity:
Oh! could I throw aside these earthly bands
That tie me down where wretched mortals sigh,—
To join blest spirits in celestial lands! MOREHEAD.

SONNET XLVI.

Mente mia che presaga de' tuoi danni.

HE RECALLS WITH GRIEF THEIR LAST MEETING.

MY mind! prophetic of my coming fate,
Pensive and gloomy while yet joy was lent,

On the loved lineaments still fix'd, intent
To seek dark bodings, ere thy sorrow's date!
From her sweet acts, her words, her looks, her gait,
From her unwonted pity with sadness blent,
Thou might'st have said, hadst thou been prescient,
"I taste my last of bliss in this low state!"
My wretched soul! the poison, oh, how sweet!
That through my eyes instill'd the burning smart,
Gazing on hers, no more on earth to meet!
To them—my bosom's wealth! condemn'd to part
On a far journey—as to friends discreet,
All my fond thoughts I left, and lingering heart. DACRE.

SONNET XLVII.

Tutta la mia fiorita e verde etade.

JUST WHEN HE MIGHT FAIRLY HOPE SOME RETURN OF AFFECTION, ENVIOUS DEATH CARRIES HER OFF.

ALL my green years and golden prime of man
Had pass'd away, and with attemper'd sighs
My bosom heaved—ere yet the days arise
When life declines, contracting its brief span.
Already my loved enemy began
To lull suspicion, and in sportive guise,
With timid confidence, though playful, wise,
In gentle mockery my long pains to scan:
The hour was near when Love, at length, may mate
With Chastity; and, by the dear one's side,
The lover's thoughts and words may freely flow:
Death saw, with envy, my too happy state,
E'en its fair promise—and, with fatal pride,
Strode in the midway forth, an armèd foe! DACRE.

Now of my life each gay and greener year
Pass'd by, and cooler grew each hour the flame
With which I burn'd: and to that point we came
Whence life descends, as to its end more near;
Now 'gan my lovely foe each virtuous fear
Gently to lay aside, as safe from blame;
And though with saint-like virtue still the same,
Mock'd my sweet pains indeed, but deign'd to hear

Nigh drew the time when Love delights to dwell
With Chastity; and lovers with their mate
Can fearless sit, and all they muse of tell.
Death envied me the joys of such a state;
Nay, e'en the hopes I form'd: and on them fell
E'en in midway, like some arm'd foe in wait.

ANON., OX., 1795.

SONNET XLVIII.

Tempo era omai da trovar pace o tregua.

HE CONSOLES HIMSELF WITH THE BELIEF THAT SHE NOW AT LAST SYMPATHISES WITH HIM.

'TWAS time at last from so long war to find
Some peace or truce, and, haply, both were nigh,
But Death their welcome feet has turn'd behind,
Who levels all distinctions, low as high;
And as a cloud dissolves before the wind,
So she, who led me with her lustrous eye,
Whom ever I pursue with faithful mind,
Her fair life briefly ending, sought the sky.
Had she but stay'd, as I grew changed and old
Her tone had changed, and no distrust had been
To parley with me on my cherish'd ill:
With what frank sighs and fond I then had told
My lifelong toils, which now from heaven, I ween,
She sees, and with me sympathises still. MACGREGOR.

MY life's long warfare seem'd about to cease,
Peace had my spirit's contest well nigh freed;
But levelling Death, who doth to all concede
An equal doom, clipp'd Time's blest wings of peace:
As zephyrs chase the clouds of gathering fleece,
So did her life from this world's breath recede,
Their vision'd light could once my footsteps lead,
But now my all, save thought, she doth release.
Oh! would that she her flight awhile had stay'd,
For Time had stamp'd on me his warning hand,
And calmer I had told my storied love:
To her in virtue's tone I had convey'd
My heart's long grief—now, she doth understand,
And sympathises with that grief above. WOLLASTON.

SONNET XLIX.

Tranquillo porto avea mostrato Amore.

DEATH HAS ROBBED HIM IN ONE MOMENT OF THE FRUIT OF HIS LIFE.

From life's long storm of trouble and of tears
Love show'd a tranquil haven and fair end
'Mid better thoughts which riper age attend,
That vice lays bare and virtue clothes and cheers.
She saw my true heart, free from doubts and fears,
And its high faith which could no more offend;
Ah, cruel Death! how quick wert thou to rend
In so few hours the fruit of many years!
A longer life the time had surely brought
When in her chaste ear my full heart had laid
The ancient burthen of its dearest thought;
And she, perchance, might then have answer made,
Forth-sighing some blest words, whilst white and few
Our locks became, and wan our cheeks in hue.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET L.

Al cader d' una pianta che si svelse.

UNDER THE ALLEGORY OF A LAUREL HE AGAIN DEPLORES HER DEATH.

As a fair plant, uprooted by oft blows
Of trenchant spade, or which the blast upheaves,
Scatters on earth its green and lofty leaves,
And its bare roots to the broad sunlight shows;
Love such another for my object chose,
Of whom for me the Muse a subject weaves,
Who in my captured heart her home achieves,
As on some wall or tree the ivy grows
That living laurel—where their chosen nest
My high thoughts made, where sigh'd mine ardent grief,
Yet never stirr'd of its fair boughs a leaf—
To heaven translated, in my heart, her rest,
Left deep its roots, whence ever with sad cry
I call on her, who ne'er vouchsafes reply. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LI.

I dì miei più leggier che nessun cervo.

HIS PASSION FINDS ITS ONLY CONSOLATION IN CONTEMPLATING HER IN HEAVEN.

My days more swiftly than the forest hind
Have fled like shadows, and no pleasure seen
Save for a moment, and few hours serene,
Whose bitter-sweet I treasure in true mind.
O wretched world, unstable, wayward! Blind
Whose hopes in thee alone have centred been;
In thee my heart was captived by her mien
Who bore it with her when she earth rejoin'd:
Her better spirit, now a deathless flower,
And in the highest heaven that still shall be,
Each day inflames me with its beauties more.
Alone, though frailer, fonder every hour,
I muse on her—Now what, and where is she,
And what the lovely veil which here she wore? MACGREGOR.

Oh! swifter than the hart my life hath fled,
A shadow'd dream; one wingèd glance hath seen
Its only good; its hours (how few serene!)
The sweet and bitter tide of thought have fed:
Ephemeral world! in pride and sorrow bred,
Who hope in thee, are blind as I have been;
I hoped in thee, and thus my heart's loved queen
Hath borne it mid her nerveless, kindred dead.
Her form decay'd—its beauty still survives,
For in high heaven that soul will ever bloom,
With which each day I more enamour'd grow:
Thus though my locks are blanch'd, my hope revives
In thinking on her home—her soul's high doom:
Alas! how changed the shrine she left below! WOLLASTON.

SONNET LII.

Sento l' aura mia antica, e i dolci colli.

HE REVISITS VAUCLUSE.

I feel the well-known gale; the hills I spy
So pleasant, whence my fair her being drew,
Which made these eyes, while Heaven was willing, shew
Wishful, and gay; now sad, and never dry.

O feeble hopes! O thoughts of vanity!
Wither'd the grass, the rills of turbid hue;
And void and cheerless is that dwelling too,
In which I live, in which I wish'd to die;
Hoping its mistress might at length afford
Some respite to my woes by plaintive sighs,
And sorrows pour'd from her once-burning eyes.
I've served a cruel and ungrateful lord:
While lived my beauteous flame, my heart he fired;
And o'er its ashes now I weep expired. NOTT.

ONCE more, ye balmy gales, I feel you blow;
Again, sweet hills, I mark the morning beams
Gild your green summits; while your silver streams
Through vales of fragrance undulating flow.
But you, ye dreams of bliss, no longer here
Give life and beauty to the glowing scene;
For stern remembrance stands where you have been,
And blasts the verdure of the blooming year.
O Laura! Laura! in the dust with thee,
Would I could find a refuge from despair!
Is this thy boasted triumph, Love, to tear
A heart thy coward malice dares not free;
And bid it live, while every hope is fled,
To weep, among the ashes of the dead?

ANNE BANNERMAN.

SONNET LIII.

E questo 'l nido in che la mia Fenice.

THE SIGHT OF LAURA'S HOUSE REMINDS HIM OF HIS MISERY.

Is this the nest in which my phœnix first
Her plumage donn'd of purple and of gold,
Beneath her wings who knew my heart to hold,
For whom e'en yet its sighs and wishes burst?
Prime root in which my cherish'd ill had birth,
Where is the fair face whence that bright light came,
Alive and glad which kept me in my flame?
Now bless'd in heaven as then alone on earth;
Wretched and lonely thou hast left me here,
Fond lingering by the scenes, with sorrows drown'd,
To thee which consecrate I still revere.

Watching the hills as dark night gathers round,
Whence its last flight to heaven thy soul did take,
And where my day those bright eyes wont to make.
MACGREGOR.

Is this the nest in which her wings of gold,
Of gold and purple plume, my phœnix laid?
How flutter'd my fond heart beneath their shade!
But now its sighs proclaim that dwelling cold:
Sweet source! from which my bliss, my bane, have roll'd,
Where is that face, in living light array'd,
That burn'd me, yet my sole enjoyment made?
Unparallel'd on earth, the heavens now hold
Thee bless'd!—but I am left wretched, alone!
Yet ever in my grief return to see
And honour this sweet place, though thou art gone.
A black night veils the hills, whence rising free
Thou took'st thy heavenward flight! Ah! when they shone
In morning radiance, it was all from thee! MOREHEAD.

SONNET LIV.

Mai non vedranno le mie luci asciutte.

TO THE MEMORY OF GIACOMO COLONNA, WHO DIED BEFORE PETRARCH COULD REPLY TO A LETTER OF HIS.

NE'ER shall I see again with eyes unwet,
Or with the sure powers of a tranquil mind,
Those characters where Love so brightly shined,
And his own hand affection seem'd to set;
Spirit! amid earth's strifes unconquer'd yet,
Breathing such sweets from heaven which now has shrined,
As once more to my wandering verse has join'd
The style which Death had led me to forget.
Another work, than my young leaves more bright,
I thought to show: what envying evil star
Snatch'd thee, my noble treasure, thus from me?
So soon who hides thee from my fond heart's sight,
And from thy praise my loving tongue would bar?
My soul has rest, sweet sigh! alone in thee. MACGREGOR.

OH! ne'er shall I behold with tearless eye
Or tranquil soul those characters of thine,
In which affection doth so brightly shine,
And charity's own hand I can descry!

Blest soul! that could this earthly strife defy,
Thy sweets instilling from thy home divine,
Thou wakest in me the tone which once was mine,
To sing my rhymes Death's power did long deny.
With these, my brow's young leaves, I fondly dream'd
Another work than this had greeted thee:
What iron planet envied thus our love?
My treasure! veil'd ere age had darkly gleam'd;
Thou—whom my song records—my heart doth see;
Thou wakest my sigh, and sighing, rest I prove.

WOLLASTON.

CANZONE III.

Standomi un giorno solo alla finestra.

UNDER VARIOUS ALLEGORIES HE PAINTS THE VIRTUE, BEAUTY, AND UNTIMELY DEATH OF LAURA.

WHILE at my window late I stood alone,
So new and many things there cross'd my sight,
To view them I had almost weary grown.
A dappled hind appear'd upon the right,
In aspect gentle, yet of stately stride,
By two swift greyhounds chased, a black and white,
Who tore in the poor side
Of that fair creature wounds so deep and wide,
That soon they forced her where ravine and rock
The onward passage block:
Then triumph'd Death her matchless beauties o'er,
And left me lonely there her sad fate to deplore.

Upon the summer wave a gay ship danced,
Her cordage was of silk, of gold her sails,
Her sides with ivory and ebon glanced,
The sea was tranquil, favouring were the gales,
And heaven as when no cloud its azure veils.
A rich and goodly merchandise is hers;
But soon the tempest wakes,
And wind and wave to such mad fury stirs,
That, driven on the rocks, in twain she breaks;
My heart with pity aches,
That a short hour should whelm, a small space hide,
Riches for which the world no equal had beside.

In a fair grove a bright young laurel made
—Surely to Paradise the plant belongs!—
Of sacred boughs a pleasant summer shade,
From whose green depths there issued so sweet songs
Of various birds, and many a rare delight
Of eye and ear, what marvel from the world
They stole my senses quite!
While still I gazed, the heavens grew black around,
The fatal lightning flash'd, and sudden hurl'd,
Uprooted to the ground,
That blessed birth. Alas! for it laid low,
And its dear shade whose like we ne'er again shall know.

A crystal fountain in that very grove
Gush'd from a rock, whose waters fresh and clear
Shed coolness round and softly murmur'd love;
Never that leafy screen and mossy seat
Drew browsing flock or whistling rustic near
But nymphs and muses danced to music sweet.
There as I sat and drank
With infinite delight their carols gay,
And mark'd their sport, the earth before me sank
And bore with it away
The fountain and the scene, to my great grief,
Who now in memory find a sole and scant relief.

A lovely and rare bird within the wood,
Whose crest with gold, whose wings with purple gleam'd,
Alone, but proudly soaring, next I view'd,
Of heavenly and immortal birth which seem'd,
Flitting now here, now there, until it stood
Where buried fount and broken laurel lay,
And sadly seeing there
The fallen trunk, the boughs all stripp'd and bare,
The channel dried—for all things to decay
So tend—it turn'd away
As if in angry scorn, and instant fled,
While through me for her loss new love and pity spread.

At length along the flowery sward I saw
So sweet and fair a lady pensive move
That her mere thought inspires a tender awe;
Meek in herself, but haughty against Love,

Flow'd from her waist a robe so fair and fine
Seem'd gold and snow together there to join:
But, ah! each charm above
Was veil'd from sight in an unfriendly cloud:
Stung by a lurking snake, as flowers that pine
Her head she gently bow'd,
And joyful pass'd on high, perchance secure:
Alas! that in the world grief only should endure.

My song! in each sad change,
These visions, as they rise, sweet, solemn, strange,
But show how deeply in thy master's breast
The fond desire abides to die and be at rest. MACGREGOR.

BALLATA I.

Amor, quando fioria.

HIS GRIEF AT SURVIVING HER IS MITIGATED BY THE CONSCIOUSNESS THAT SHE NOW KNOWS HIS HEART.

YES, Love, at that propitious time
When hope was in its bloomy prime,
And when I vainly fancied nigh
The meed of all my constancy;
Then sudden she, of whom I sought
Compassion, from my sight was caught.
O ruthless Death! O life severe!
The one has sunk me deep in care,
And darken'd cruelly my day,
That shone with hope's enlivening ray:
The other, adverse to my will,
Doth here on earth detain me still;
And interdicts me to pursue
Her, who from all its scenes withdrew:
Yet in my heart resides the fair,
For ever, ever present there;
Who well perceives the ills that wait
Upon my wretched, mortal state. NOTT.

YES, Love, while hope still bloom'd with me in pride,
While seem'd of all my faith the guerdon nigh,
She, upon whom for mercy I relied,
Was ravish'd from my doting desolate eye.

O ruthless Death! O life unwelcome! this
Plunged me in deepest woe,
And rudely crush'd my every hope of bliss;
Against my will that keeps me here below,
Who else would yearn to go,
And join the sainted fair who left us late;
Yet present every hour
In my heart's core there wields she her old power,
And knows, whate'er my life, its every state! MACGREGOR.

CANZONE IV.

Tacer non posso, e temo non adopre.

HE RECALLS HER MANY GRACES.

FAIN would I speak—too long has silence seal'd
Lips that would gladly with my full heart move
With one consent, and yield
Homage to her who listens from above;
Yet how can I, without thy prompting, Love,
With mortal words e'er equal things divine,
And picture faithfully
The high humility whose chosen shrine
Was that fair prison whence she now is free?
Which held, erewhile, her gentle spirit, when
So in my conscious heart her power began,
That, instantly, I ran,
—Alike o' th' year and me 'twas April then—
From these gay meadows round sweet flowers to bind,
Hoping rich pleasure at her eyes to find.

The walls were alabaster, the roof gold,
Ivory the doors, the sapphire windows lent
Whence on my heart of old
Its earliest sigh, as shall my last, was sent;
In arrowy jets of fire thence came and went
Arm'd messengers of love, whereof to think
As then they were, with awe
—Though now for them with laurel crown'd—I shrink.
Of one rare diamond, square, without a flaw,
High in the midst a stately throne was placed
Where sat the lovely lady all alone:

In front a column shone
Of crystal, and thereon each thought was traced
In characters so clear, and quick, and true,
By turns it gladden'd me and grieved to view.

To weapons such as these, sharp, burning, bright,
To the green glorious banner waved above,
—'Gainst which would fail in fight
Mars, Polypheme, Apollo, mighty Jove—
While still my sorrow fresh and verdant throve,
I stood defenceless, doom'd; her easy prey
She led me as she chose
Whence to escape I knew nor art nor way;
But, as a friend, who, haply, grieves yet goes,
Sees something still to lure his eyes and heart,
Just so on her, for whom I am in thrall,
Sole perfect work of all
That graced her age, unable to depart,
With such desire my rapt regards I set,
As soon myself and misery to forget.

On earth myself, my heart in Eden dwelt,
Lost in sweet Lethe every other care,
As my live frame I felt
To marble turn, watching that wonder rare;
When old in years, but youthful still in air,
A lady briefly, quietly drew nigh,
And thus beholding me,
With reverent aspect and admiring eye,
Kind offer made my counsellor to be:
"My power," she said, "is more than mortals know;
Lighter than air, I, in an instant, make
Their hearts exult or ache,
I loose and bind whate'er is seen below;
Thine eyes, upon that sun, as eagles', bend,
But to my words with willing ears attend.

"The day when she was born, the stars that win
Prosperity for man shone bright above;
Their high glad homes within
Each on the other smiled with gratulant love;
Fair Venus, and, with gentle aspect, Jove

The beautiful and lordly mansions held:
Seem'd as each adverse light
Throughout all heaven was darken'd and dispell'd;
The sun ne'er look'd upon a day so bright;
The air and earth rejoiced; the waves had rest
By lake and river, and o'er ocean green:
'Mid the enchanting scene
One distant cloud alone my thought distress'd,
Lest sometime it might be of tears the source
Unless kind Heaven should elsewhere turn its course.

"When first she enter'd on this life below,
Which, to say sooth, not worthy was to hold,
'Twas strange to see her so
Angelical and dear in baby mould;
A snowy pearl she seem'd in finest gold;
Next as she crawl'd, or totter'd with short pace,
Wood, water, earth, and stone
Grew green, and clear, and soft; with livelier grace
The sward beneath her feet and fingers shone;
With flowers the champain to her bright eyes smiled;
At her sweet voice, babbling through lips that yet
From Love's own fount were wet,
The hoarse wind silent grew, the tempest mild:
Thus clearly showing to the dull blind world
How much in her was heaven's own light unfurl'd.

"At length, her life's third flowery epoch won,
She, year by year, so grew in charms and worth,
That ne'er, methinks, the sun
Such gracefulness and beauty saw on earth;
Her eyes so full of modesty and mirth,
Music and welcome on her words so hung,
That mute in her high praise,
Which thine alone may sound, is every tongue:
So bright her countenance with heavenly rays,
Not long thy dazzled vision there may rest;
From this her fair and fleshly tenement
Such fire through thine is sent
(Though gentler never kindled human breast),
That yet I fear her sudden flight may be
Too soon the cause of bitter grief to thee."

This said, she turn'd her to the rapid wheel
Whereon she winds of mortal life the thread;
Too true did she reveal
The doom of woe which darken'd o'er my head!
A few brief years flew by,
When she, for whom I so desire to die,
By black and pitiless Death, who could not slay
A fairer form than hers, was snatch'd away! MACGREGOR.

SONNET LV.

Or hai fatto l' estremo di tua possa.

DEATH MAY DEPRIVE HIM OF THE SIGHT OF HER BEAUTIES, BUT NOT OF THE MEMORY OF HER VIRTUES.

Now hast thou shown, fell Death! thine utmost might,
Through Love's bright realm hast want and darkness spread,
Hast now cropp'd beauty's flower, its heavenly light
Quench'd, and enclosed in the grave's narrow bed;
Now hast thou life despoil'd of all delight,
Its ornament and sovereign honour shed:
But fame and worth it is not thine to blight;
These mock thy power, and sleep not with the dead.
Be thine the mortal part; heaven holds the best,
And, glorying in its brightness, brighter glows,
While memory still records the great and good.
O thou, in thine high triumph, angel blest!
Let thy heart yield to pity of my woes,
E'en as thy beauty here my soul subdued. DACRE.

Now hast thou shown the utmost of thy might,
O cruel Death! Love's kingdom hast thou rent,
And made it poor; in narrow grave hast pent
The blooming flower of beauty and its light!
Our wretched life thou hast despoil'd outright
Of every honour, every ornament!
But then her fame, her worth, by thee unblent,
Shall still survive!—her dust is all thy right;
The rest heaven holds, proud of her charms divine
As of a brighter sun. Nor dies she here—
Her memory lasts, to good men ever dear!
O angel new, in thy celestial sphere
Let pity now thy sainted heart incline,
As here below thy beauty vanquish'd mine! CHARLEMONT.

SONNET LVI.

L' aura e l' odore e 'l refrigerio e l' ombra.

HER OWN VIRTUES IMMORTALISE HER IN HEAVEN, AND HIS PRAISES ON EARTH.

THE air and scent, the comfort and the shade
Of my sweet laurel, and its flowery sight,
That to my weary life gave rest and light,
Death, spoiler of the world, has lowly laid.
As when the moon our sun's eclipse has made,
My lofty light has vanish'd so in night;
For aid against himself I Death invite;
With thoughts so dark does Love my breast invade.
Thou didst but sleep, bright lady, a brief sleep,
In bliss amid the chosen spirits to wake,
Who gaze upon their God, distinct and near:
And if my verse shall any value keep,
Preserved and praised 'mid noble minds to make
Thy name, its memory shall be deathless here.

MACGREGOR.

THE fragrant gale, and the refreshing shade
Of my sweet laurel, and its verdant form,
That were my shelter in life's weary storm,
Have felt the power that makes all nature fade:
Now has my light been lost in gloomy shade,
E'en as the sun behind his sister's form:
I call for Death to free me from Death's storm,
But Love descends and brings me better aid!
He tells me, lady, that one moment's sleep
Alone was thine, and then thou didst awake
Among the elect, and in thy Maker's arms:
And if my verse oblivion's power can keep
Aloof, thy name its place on earth will take
Where Genius still will dote upon thy charms!

MOREHEAD.

SONNET LVII.

L' ultimo, lasso! de' miei giorni allegri.

HE REVERTS TO THEIR LAST MEETING.

THE last, alas! of my bright days and glad
—Few have been mine in this brief life below—

Had come; I felt my heart as tepid snow,
Presage, perchance, of days both dark and sad.
As one in nerves, and pulse, and spirits bad,
Who of some frequent fever waits the blow,
E'en so I felt—for how could I foreknow
Such near end of the half-joys I have had?
Her beauteous eyes, in heaven now bright and bless'd
With the pure light whence health and life descends,
(Wretched and beggar'd leaving me behind,)
With chaste and soul-lit beams our grief address'd:
"Tarry ye here in peace, belovèd friends,
Though here no more, we yet shall there be join'd."

MACGREGOR.

AH me! the last of all my happy days
(Not many happy days my years can show)
Was come! I felt my heart as turn'd to snow,
Presage, perhaps, that happiness decays!
E'en as the man whose shivering frame betrays,
And fluttering pulse, the ague's coming blow;
'Twas thus I felt!—but could I therefore know
How soon would end the bliss that never stays?
Those eyes that now, in heaven's delicious light,
Drink in pure beams which life and glory rain,
Just as they left mine, blinded, sunk in night,
Seem'd thus to say, sparkling unwonted bright,—
"Awhile, beloved friends, in peace remain,
Oh, we shall yet elsewhere exchange fond looks again!"

MOREHEAD.

SONNET LVIII.

O giorno, o ora, o ultimo momento.

HE MOURNS HIS WANT OF PERCEPTION AT THAT MEETING.

O DAY, O hour, O moment sweetest, last,
O stars conspired to make me poor indeed!
O look too true, in which I seem'd to read,
At parting, that my happiness was past;
Now my full loss I know, I feel at last:
Then I believed (ah! weak and idle creed!)
'Twas but a part alone I lost; instead,
Was there a hope that flew not with the blast?

For, even then, it was in heaven ordain'd
That the sweet light of all my life should die:
'Twas written in her sadly-pensive eye!
But mine unconscious of the truth remain'd;
Or, what it would not see, to see refrain'd;
That I might sink in sudden misery! MOREHEAD.

DARK hour, last moment of that fatal day!
Stars which to beggar me of bliss combined!
O faithful glance, too well which seem'dst to say
Farewell to me, farewell to peace of mind!
Awaken'd now, my losses I survey:
Alas! I fondly thought—thoughts weak and blind!—
That absence would take part, not all, away;
How many hopes it scatter'd to the wind.
Heaven had already doom'd it otherwise,
To quench for ever my life's genial light,
And in her sad sweet face 'twas written so.
Surely a veil was placed around mine eyes;
That blinded me to all before my sight,
And sank at once my life in deepest woe. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LIX.

Quel vago, dolce, caro, onesto sguardo.

HE SHOULD HAVE FORESEEN HIS LOSS IN THE UNUSUAL LUSTRE OF HER EYES.

THAT glance of hers, pure, tender, clear, and sweet,
Methought it said, "Take what thou canst while nigh;
For here no more thou'lt see me, till on high
From earth have mounted thy slow-moving feet."
O intellect than forest pard more fleet!
Yet slow and dull thy sorrow to descry,
How didst thou fail to see in her bright eye
What since befell, whence I my ruin meet.
Silently shining with a fire sublime,
They said, "O friendly lights, which long have been
Mirrors to us where gladly we were seen,
Heaven waits for you, as ye shall know in time;
Who bound us to the earth dissolves our bond,
But wills in your despite that you shall live beyond."
MACGREGOR.

CANZONE V.

Solea dalla fontana di mia vita.

MEMORY IS HIS ONLY SOLACE AND SUPPORT.

I WHO was wont from life's best fountain far
So long to wander, searching land and sea,
Pursuing not my pleasure, but my star,
And alway, as Love knows who strengthen'd me,
Ready in bitter exile to depart,
For hope and memory both then fed my heart;
Alas! now wring my hands, and to unkind
And angry Fortune, which away has reft
That so sweet hope, my armour have resign'd;
And, memory only left,
I feed my great desire on that alone,
Whence frail and famish'd is my spirit grown.

As haply by the way, if want of food
Compel the traveller to relax his speed,
Losing that strength which first his steps endued,
So feeling, for my weary life, the need
Of that dear nourishment Death rudely stole,
Leaving the world all bare, and sad my soul,
From time to time fair pleasures pall, my sweet
To bitter turns, fear rises, and hopes fail,
My course, though brief, that I shall e'er complete:
Cloudlike before the gale,
To win some resting-place from rest I flee,
—If such indeed my doom, so let it be.

Never to mortal life could I incline,
—Be witness, Love, with whom I parley oft—
Except for her who was its light and mine.
And since, below extinguish'd, shines aloft
The life in which I lived, if lawful 'twere,
My chief desire would be to follow her:
But mine is ample cause of grief, for I
To see my future fate was ill supplied;
This Love reveal'd within her beauteous eye
Elsewhere my hopes to guide:
Too late he dies, disconsolate and sad,
Whom death a little earlier had made glad.

In those bright eyes, where wont my heart to dwell,
Until by envy my hard fortune stirr'd
Rose from so rich a temple to expel,
Love with his proper hand had character'd
In lines of pity what, ere long, I ween
The issue of my old desire had been.
Dying alone, and not my life with me,
Comely and sweet it then had been to die,
Leaving my life's best part unscathed and free;
But now my fond hopes lie
Dead in her silent dust: a secret chill
Shoots through me when I think that I live still.

If my poor intellect had but the force
To help my need, and if no other lure
Had led it from the plain and proper course,
Upon my lady's brow 'twere easy sure
To have read this truth, "Here all thy pleasure dies,
And hence thy lifelong trial dates its rise."
My spirit then had gently pass'd away
In her dear presence from all mortal care;
Freed from this troublesome and heavy clay,
Mounting, before her, where
Angels and saints prepared on high her place,
Whom I but follow now with slow sad pace.

My song! if one there be
Who in his love finds happiness and rest,
Tell him this truth from me,
"Die, while thou still art bless'd,
For death betimes is comfort, not dismay,
And who can rightly die needs no delay." MACGREGOR.

SESTINA I.

Mia benigna fortuna e 'l viver lieto.

IN HIS MISERY HE DESIRES DEATH THE MORE HE REMEMBERS HIS PAST CONTENTMENT AND COMFORT.

My favouring fortune and my life of joy,
My days so cloudless, and my tranquil nights,
The tender sigh, the pleasing power of song,
Which gently wont to sound in verse and rhyme,

Suddenly darken'd into grief and tears,
Make me hate life and inly pray for death!

O cruel, grim, inexorable Death!
How hast thou dried my every source of joy,
And left me to drag on a life of tears,
Through darkling days and melancholy nights.
My heavy sighs no longer meet in rhyme,
And my hard martyrdom exceeds all song!

Where now is vanish'd my once amorous song?
To talk of anger and to treat with death;
Where the fond verses, where the happy rhyme
Welcomed by gentle hearts with pensive joy?
Where now Love's communings that cheer'd my nights?
My sole theme, my one thought, is now but tears!

Erewhile to my desire so sweet were tears
Their tenderness refined my else rude song,
And made me wake and watch the livelong nights;
But sorrow now to me is worse than death,
Since lost for aye that look of modest joy,
The lofty subject of my lowly rhyme!

Love in those bright eyes to my ready rhyme
Gave a fair theme, now changed, alas! to tears;
With grief remembering that time of joy,
My changed thoughts issue find in other song,
Evermore thee beseeching, pallid Death,
To snatch and save me from these painful nights!

Sleep has departed from my anguish'd nights,
Music is absent from my rugged rhyme,
Which knows not now to sound of aught but death;
Its notes, so thrilling once, all turn'd to tears,
Love knows not in his reign such varied song,
As full of sadness now as then of joy!

Man lived not then so crown'd as I with joy,
Man lives not now such wretched days and nights;
And my full festering grief but swells the song
Which from my bosom draws the mournful rhyme;
I lived in hope, who now live but in tears,
Nor against death have other hope save death!

Me Death in her has kill'd; and only Death
Can to my sight restore that face of joy,
Which pleasant made to me e'en sighs and tears,
Balmy the air, and dewy soft the nights,
Wherein my choicest thoughts I gave to rhyme
While Love inspirited my feeble song!

Would that such power as erst graced Orpheus' song
Were mine to win my Laura back from death,
As he Eurydice without a rhyme;.
Then would I live in best excess of joy;
Or, that denied me, soon may some sad night
Close for me ever these twin founts of tears!

Love! I have told with late and early tears,
My grievous injuries in doleful song;
Not that I hope from thee less cruel nights;
And therefore am I urged to pray for death,
Which hence would take me but to crown with joy,
Where lives she whom I sing in this sad rhyme!

If so high may aspire my weary rhyme,
To her now shelter'd safe from rage and tears,
Whose beauties fill e'en heaven with livelier joy,
Well would she recognise my alter'd song,
Which haply pleased her once, ere yet by death
Her days were cloudless made and dark my nights!

O ye, who fondly sigh for better nights,
Who listen to love's will, or sing in rhyme,
Pray that for me be no delay in death,
The port of misery, the goal of tears,
But let him change for me his ancient song,
Since what makes others sad fills me with joy!

Ay! for such joy, in one or in few nights,
I pray in rude song and in anguish'd rhyme,
That soon my tears may ended be in death! MACGREGOR.

SONNET LX.

Ite, rime dolenti, al duro sasso.

HE PRAYS THAT SHE WILL BE NEAR HIM AT HIS DEATH, WHICH HE FEELS APPROACHING.

Go, plaintive verse, to the cold marble go,
Which hides in earth my treasure from these eyes;

There call on her who answers from yon skies,
Although the mortal part dwells dark and low.
Of life how I am wearied make her know,
Of stemming these dread waves that round me rise:
But, copying all her virtues I so prize,
Her track I follow, yet my steps are slow.
I sing of her, living, or dead, alone;
(Dead, did I say? She is immortal made!)
That by the world she should be loved, and known.
Oh! in my passage hence may she be near,
To greet my coming that's not long delay'd;
And may I hold in heaven the rank herself holds there!

NOTT.

Go, melancholy rhymes! your tribute bring
To that cold stone, which holds the dear remains
Of all that earth held precious;—uttering,
If heaven should deign to hear them, earthly strains.
Tell her, that sport of tempests, fit no more
To stem the troublous ocean,—here at last
Her votary treads the solitary shore;
His only pleasure to recall the past.
Tell her, that she who living ruled his fate,
In death still holds her empire: all his care,
So grant the Muse her aid,—to celebrate
Her every word, and thought, and action fair.
Be this my meed, that in the hour of death
Her kindred spirit may hail, and bless my parting breath!

WOODHOUSELEE.

SONNET LXI.

S' onesto amor può meritar mercede.

HE PRAYS THAT, IN REWARD FOR HIS LONG AND VIRTUOUS ATTACHMENT, SHE WILL VISIT HIM IN DEATH.

IF Mercy e'er rewardeth virtuous love,
If Pity still can do, as she has done,
I shall have rest, for clearer than the sun
My lady and the world my faith approve.
Who fear'd me once, now knows, yet scarce believes
I am the same who wont her love to seek,
Who seek it still; where she but heard me speak,
Or saw my face, she now my soul perceives.

Wherefore I hope that e'en in heaven she mourns
My heavy anguish, and on me the while
Her sweet face eloquent of pity turns,
And that when shuffled off this mortal coil,
Her way to me with that fair band she'll wend,
True follower of Christ and virtue's friend. MACGREGOR.

IF virtuous love doth merit recompense—
If pity still maintain its wonted sway—
I that reward shall win, for bright as day
To earth and Laura breathes my faith's incense.
She fear'd me once—now heavenly confidence
Reveals my heart's first hope's unchanging stay;
A word, a look, could this alone convey,
My heart she reads now, stripp'd of earth's defence.
And thus I hope, she for my heavy sighs
To heaven complains, to me she pity shows
By sympathetic visits in my dream:
And when this mortal temple breathless lies,
Oh! may she greet my soul, enclosed by those
Whom heaven and virtue love—our friends supreme.
WOLLASTON.

SONNET LXII.

Vidi fra mille donne una già tale.

BEAUTY SHOWED ITSELF IN, AND DISAPPEARED WITH, LAURA.

'MID many fair one such by me was seen
That amorous fears my heart did instant seize,
Beholding her—nor false the images—
Equal to angels in her heavenly mien.
Nothing in her was mortal or terrene,
As one whom nothing short of heaven can please;
My soul well train'd for her to burn and freeze
Sought in her wake to mount the blue serene.
But ah! too high for earthly wings to rise
Her pitch, and soon she wholly pass'd from sight;
The very thought still makes me cold and numb;
O beautiful and high and lustrous eyes,
Where Death, who fills the world with grief and fright,
Found entrance in so fair a form to come. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXIII.

Tornami a mente, anzi v' è dentro quella.

SHE IS SO FIXED IN HIS HEART THAT AT TIMES HE BELIEVES HER STILL ALIVE, AND IS FORCED TO RECALL THE DATE OF HER DEATH.

OH! to my soul for ever she returns;
Or rather Lethe could not blot her thence,
Such as she was when first she struck my sense,
In that bright blushing age when beauty burns:
So still I see her, bashful as she turns
Retired into herself, as from offence:
I cry—"'Tis she! she still has life and sense:
Oh, speak to me, my love!"—Sometimes she spurns
My call; sometimes she seems to answer straight:
Then, starting from my waking dream, I say,—
"Alas! poor wretch, thou art of mind bereft!
Forget'st thou the first hour of the sixth day
Of April, the three hundred, forty eight,
And thousandth year,—when she her earthly mansion left?"

MOREHEAD.

MY mind recalls her; nay, her home is there,
Nor can Lethean draught drive thence her form,
I see that star's pure ray her spirit warm,
Whose grace and spring-time beauty she doth wear.
As thus my vision paints her charms so rare,
That none to such perfection may conform,
I cry, "'Tis she! death doth to life transform!"
And then to hear that voice, I wake my prayer.
She now replies, and now doth mute appear,
Like one whose tottering mind regains its power;
I speak my heart: "Thou must this cheat resign;
The thirteen hundred, eight and fortieth year,
The sixth of April's suns, his first bright hour,
Thou know'st that soul celestial fled its shrine!"

WOLLASTON.

SONNET LXIV.

Questo nostro caduco e fragil bene.

NATURE DISPLAYED IN HER EVERY CHARM, BUT SOON WITHDREW HER FROM SIGHT.

THIS gift of beauty which a good men name,
Frail, fleeting, fancied, false, a wind, a shade,

Ne'er yet with all its spells one fair array'd,
Save in this age when for my cost it came.
Not such is Nature's duty, nor her aim,
One to enrich if others poor are made,
But now on one is all her wealth display'd,
—Ladies, your pardon let my boldness claim.
Like loveliness ne'er lived, or old or new,
Nor ever shall, I ween, but hid so strange,
Scarce did our erring world its marvel view,
So soon it fled; thus too my soul must change
The little light vouchsafed me from the skies
Only for pleasure of her sainted eyes. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXV.

O tempo, o ciel volubil che fuggendo.

HE NO LONGER CONTEMPLATES THE MORTAL, BUT THE IMMORTAL BEAUTIES OF LAURA.

O TIME! O heavens! whose flying changes frame
Errors and snares for mortals poor and blind;
O days more swift than arrows or the wind,
Experienced now, I know your treacherous aim.
You I excuse, myself alone I blame,
For Nature for your flight who wings design'd
To me gave eyes which still I have inclined
To mine own ill, whence follow grief and shame.
An hour will come, haply e'en now is pass'd,
Their sight to turn on my diviner part
And so this infinite anguish end at last.
Rejects not your long yoke, O Love, my heart,
But its own ill by study, sufferings vast:
Virtue is not of chance, but painful art. MACGREGOR.

O TIME! O circling heavens! in your flight
Us mortals ye deceive—so poor and blind;
O days! more fleeting than the shaft or wind,
Experience brings your treachery to my sight!
But mine the error—ye yourselves are right;
Your flight fulfils but that your wings design'd:
My eyes were Nature's gift, yet ne'er could find
But one blest light—and hence their present blight.
It now is time (perchance the hour is pass'd
That they a safer dwelling should select,

And thus repose might soothe my grief acute:
Love's yoke the spirit may not from it cast,
(With oh what pain!) it may its ill eject;
But virtue is attain'd but by pursuit! WOLLASTON.

SONNET LXVI.

Quel, che d' odore e di color vincea.

THE LAUREL IN WHOM HE PLACED ALL HIS JOY HAS BEEN TAKEN FROM HIM TO ADORN HEAVEN.

THAT which in fragrance and in hue defied
The odoriferous and lucid East,
Fruits, flowers and herbs and leaves, and whence the West
Of all rare excellence obtain'd the prize,
My laurel sweet, which every beauty graced,
Where every glowing virtue loved to dwell,
Beheld beneath its fair and friendly shade
My Lord, and by his side my Goddess sit.
Still have I placed in that beloved plant
My home of choicest thoughts: in fire, in frost
Shivering or burning, still I have been bless'd.
The world was of her perfect honours full
When God, his own bright heaven therewith to grace,
Reclaim'd her for Himself, for she was his. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXVII.

Lasciato hai, Morte, senza sole il mondo.

HER TRUE WORTH WAS KNOWN ONLY TO HIM AND TO HEAVEN.

DEATH, thou the world, since that dire arrow sped,
Sunless and cold hast left; Love weak and blind;
Beauty and grace their brilliance have resign'd,
And from my heavy heart all joy is fled;
Honour is sunk, and softness banished.
I weep alone the woes which all my kind
Should weep—for virtue's fairest flower has pined
Beneath thy touch: what second blooms instead?
Let earth, sea, air, with common wail bemoan
Man's hapless race; which now, since Laura died,

A flowerless mead, a gemless ring appears.
The world possess'd, nor knew her worth, till flown!
I knew it well, who here in grief abide;
And heaven too knows, which decks its forehead with my tears. WRANGHAM.

THOU, Death, hast left this world's dark cheerless way
Without a sun: Love blind and stripp'd of arms;
Left mirth despoil'd; beauty bereaved of charms;
And me self-wearied, to myself a prey;
Left vanish'd, sunk, whate'er was courteous, gay:
I only weep, yet all must feel alarms:
If beauty's bud the hand of rapine harms
It dies, and not a second views the day!
Let air, earth, ocean weep for human kind;
For human kind, deprived of Laura, seems
A flowerless mead, a ring whose gem is lost.
None knew her worth while to this orb confined,
Save me her bard, whose sorrow ceaseless streams,
And heaven, that's made more beauteous at my cost.
NOTT.

SONNET LXVIII.

Conobbi, quanto il ciel gli occhi m' aperse.

HER PRAISES ARE, COMPARED WITH HER DESERTS, BUT AS A DROP TO THE OCEAN.

So far as to mine eyes its light heaven show'd,
So far as love and study train'd my wings,
Novel and beautiful but mortal things
From every star I found on her bestow'd:
So many forms in rare and varied mode
Of heavenly beauty from immortal springs
My panting intellect before me brings,
Sunk my weak sight before their dazzling load.
Hence, whatsoe'er I spoke of her or wrote,
Who, at God's right, returns me now her prayers,
Is in that infinite abyss a mote:
For style beyond the genius never dares;
Thus, though upon the sun man fix his sight,
He seeth less as fiercer burns its light. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXIX.

Dolce mio caro e prezioso pegno.

HE PRAYS HER TO APPEAR BEFORE HIM IN A VISION.

DEAR precious pledge, by Nature snatch'd away,
But yet reserved for me in realms undying;
O thou on whom my life is aye relying,
Why tarry thus, when for thine aid I pray?
Time was, when sleep could to mine eyes convey
Sweet visions, worthy thee;—why is my sighing
Unheeded now?—who keeps thee from replying?
Surely contempt in heaven cannot stay:
Often on earth the gentlest heart is fain
To feed and banquet on another's woe
(Thus love is conquer'd in his own domain),
But thou, who seest through me, and dost know
All that I feel,—thou, who canst soothe my pain,
Oh! let thy blessèd shade its peace bestow. WROTTESLEY.

SONNET LXX.

Deh qual pietà, qual angel fu sì presto.

HIS PRAYER IS HEARD.

WHAT angel of compassion, hovering near,
Heard, and to heaven my heart-grief instant bore,
Whence now I feel descending as of yore
My lady, in that bearing chaste and dear,
My lone and melancholy heart to cheer,
So free from pride, of humbleness such store,
In fine, so perfect, though at death's own door,
I live, and life no more is dull and drear.
Blessèd is she who so can others bless
With her fair sight, or with that tender speech
To whose full meaning love alone can reach.
"Dear friend," she says, "thy pangs my soul distress;
But for our good I did thy homage shun"—
In sweetest tones which might arrest the sun.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXI.

Del cibo onde 'l signor mio sempre abbonda.

HE DESCRIBES THE APPARITION OF LAURA.

Food wherewithal my lord is well supplied,
With tears and grief my weary heart I've fed;
As fears within and paleness o'er me spread,
Oft thinking on its fatal wound and wide:
But in her time with whom no other vied,
Equal or second, to my suffering bed
Comes she to look on whom I almost dread,
And takes her seat in pity by my side.
With that fair hand, so long desired in vain,
She check'd my tears, while at her accents crept
A sweetness to my soul, intense, divine.
"Is this thy wisdom, to parade thy pain?
No longer weep! hast thou not amply wept?
Would that such life were thine as death is mine!"

MACGREGOR.

With grief and tears (my soul's proud sovereign's food)
I ever nourish still my aching heart;
I feel my blanching cheek, and oft I start
As on Love's sharp engraven wound I brood.
But she, who e'er on earth unrivall'd stood,
Flits o'er my couch, when prostrate by his dart
I lie; and there her presence doth impart.
Whilst scarce my eyes dare meet their vision'd good,
With that fair hand in life I so desired,
She stays my eyes' sad tide; her voice's tone
Awakes the balm earth ne'er to man can give:
And thus she speaks:—"Oh! vain hath wisdom fired
The hopeless mourner's breast; no more bemoan,
I am not dead—would thou like me couldst live!"

WOLLASTON.

SONNET LXXII.

Ripensando a quel ch' oggi il ciel onôra.

HE WOULD DIE OF GRIEF WERE SHE NOT SOMETIMES TO CONSOLE HIM BY HER PRESENCE.

To that soft look which now adorns the skies,
The graceful bending of the radiant head,

The face, the sweet angelic accents fled,
That soothed me once, but now awake my sighs:
Oh! when to these imagination flies,
I wonder that I am not long since dead!
'Tis she supports me, for her heavenly tread
Is round my couch when morning visions rise!
In every attitude how holy, chaste!
How tenderly she seems to hear the tale
Of my long woes, and their relief to seek!
But when day breaks she then appears in haste
The well-known heavenward path again to scale,
With moisten'd eye, and soft expressive cheek!

MOREHEAD.

'Tis sweet, though sad, my trembling thoughts to raise,
As memory dwells upon that form so dear,
And think that now e'en angels join to praise
The gentle virtues that adorn'd her here;
That face, that look, in fancy to behold—
To hear that voice that did with music vie—
The bending head, crown'd with its locks of gold—
All, all that charm'd, now but sad thoughts supply.
How had I lived her bitter loss to weep,
If that pure spirit, pitying my woe,
Had not appear'd to bless my troubled sleep,
Ere memory broke upon the world below?
What pure, what gentle greetings then were mine!
In what attention wrapt she paused to hear
My life's sad course, of which she bade me speak!
But as the dawn from forth the East did shine
Back to that heaven to which her way was clear,
She fled,—while falling tears bedew'd each cheek.

WROTTESLEY

SONNET LXXIII.

Fu forse un tempo dolce cosa amore.

HE COMPLAINS OF HIS SUFFERINGS, WHICH ADMIT OF NO RELIEF.

LOVE, haply, was erewhile a sweet relief;
I scarce know when; but now it bitter grows
Beyond all else. Who learns from life well knows,
As I have learnt to know from heavy grief:

She, of our age, who was its honour chief,
Who now in heaven with brighter lustre glows,
Has robb'd my being of the sole repose
It knew in life, though that was rare and brief.
Pitiless Death my every good has ta'en!
Not the great bliss of her fair spirit-freed
Can aught console the adverse life I lead.
I wept and sang; who now can wake no strain,
But day and night the pent griefs of my soul
From eyes and tongue in tears and verses roll.

MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXIV.

Spinse amor e dolor ove ir non debbe.

REFLECTING THAT LAURA IS IN HEAVEN, HE REPENTS HIS EXCESSIVE GRIEF, AND IS CONSOLED.

SORROW and Love encouraged my poor tongue,
Discreet in sadness, where it should not go,
To speak of her for whom I burn'd and sung,
What, even were it true, 'twere wrong to show.
That blessèd saint my miserable state
Might surely soothe, and ease my spirit's strife,
Since she in heaven is now domesticate
With Him who ever ruled her heart in life.
Wherefore I am contented and consoled,
Nor would again in life her form behold;
Nay, I prefer to die, and live alone.
Fairer than ever to my mental eye,
I see her soaring with the angels high,
Before our Lord, her maker and my own. MACGREGOR.

My love and grief compell'd me to proclaim
My heart's lament, and urged me to convey
That, were it true, of her I should not say
Who woke alike my song and bosom's flame.
For I should comfort find, 'mid this world's shame,
To mark her soul's beatified array,
To think that He who here had own'd its sway,
Doth now within his home its presence claim.
And true I comfort find—myself resign'd,
I would not woo her back to earthly gloom;

Oh! rather let me die, or live still lone!
My mental eye, that holds her there enshrined,
Now paints her wing'd, bright with celestial bloom,
Prostrate beneath our mutual Heaven's throne. WOLLASTON

SONNET LXXV.

Gli angeli eletti e l' anime beate.

HE DIRECTS ALL HIS THOUGHTS TO HEAVEN, WHERE LAURA AWAITS AND BECKONS HIM.

THE chosen angels, and the spirits blest,
Celestial tenants, on that glorious day
My Lady join'd them, throng'd in bright array
Around her, with amaze and awe imprest.
"What splendour, what new beauty stands confest
Unto our sight?"—among themselves they say;
"No soul, in this vile age, from sinful clay
To our high realms has risen so fair a guest."
Delighted to have changed her mortal state,
She ranks amid the purest of her kind;
And ever and anon she looks behind,
To mark my progress and my coming wait;
Now my whole thought, my wish to heaven I cast;
'Tis Laura's voice I hear, and hence she bids me haste.
NOTT.

THE chosen angels, and the blest above,
Heaven's citizens!—the day when Laura ceased
To adorn the world, about her thronging press'd,
Replete with wonder and with holy love.
"What sight is this?—what will this beauty prove?"
Said they; "for sure no form in charms so dress'd,
From yonder globe to this high place of rest,
In all the latter age, did e'er remove!"
She, pleased and happy with her mansion new,
Compares herself with the most perfect there;
And now and then she casts a glance to view
If yet I come, and seems to wish me near.
Rise then, my thoughts, to heaven!—vain world, adieu!
My Laura calls! her quickening voice I hear!
CHARLEMONT.

SONNET LXXVI.

Donna che lieta col Principio nostro.

HE CONJURES LAURA, BY THE PURE LOVE HE EVER BORE HER, TO OBTAIN FOR HIM A SPEEDY ADMISSION TO HER IN HEAVEN.

LADY, in bliss who, by our Maker's feet,
As suited for thine excellent life alone,
Art now enthroned in high and glorious seat,
Adorn'd with charms nor pearls nor purple own;
O model high and rare of ladies sweet!
Now in his face to whom all things are known,
Look on my love, with that pure faith replete,
As long my verse and truest tears have shown,
And know at last my heart on earth to thee
Was still as now in heaven, nor wish'd in life
More than beneath thine eyes' bright sun to be:
Wherefore, to recompense the tedious strife,
Which turn'd my liege heart from the world away,
Pray that I soon may come with thee to stay.

MACGREGOR.

LADY! whose gentle virtues have obtain'd
For thee a dwelling with thy Maker blest,
To sit enthroned above, in angels' vest
(Whose lustre gold nor purple had attain'd):
Ah! thou who here the most exalted reign'd,
Now through the eyes of Him who knows each breast,
That heart's pure faith and love thou canst attest,
Which both my pen and tears alike sustain'd.
Thou, knowest, too, my heart was thine on earth,
As now it is in heaven; no wish was there
But to avow thine eyes, its only shrine:
Thus to reward the strife which owes its birth
To thee, who won my each affection'd care,
Pray God to waft me to his home and thine! WOLLASTON.

SONNET LXXVII.

Da' più begli occhi e dal più chiaro viso.

HIS ONLY COMFORT IS THE EXPECTATION OF MEETING HER AGAIN IN HEAVEN.

THE brightest eyes, the most resplendent face
That ever shone; and the most radiant hair,

With which nor gold nor sunbeam could compare;
The sweetest accent, and a smile all grace;
Hands, arms, that would e'en motionless abase
Those who to Love the most rebellious were;
Fine, nimble feet; a form that would appear
Like that of her who first did Eden trace;
These fann'd life's spark: now heaven, and all its choir
Of angel hosts those kindred charms admire;
While lone and darkling I on earth remain.
Yet is not comfort fled; she, who can read
Each secret of my soul, shall intercede;
And I her sainted form behold again. NOTT.

YES, from those finest eyes, that face most sweet
That ever shone, and from that loveliest hair,
With which nor gold nor sunbeam may compare,
That speech with love, that smile with grace replete,
From those soft hands, those white arms which defeat,
Themselves unmoved, the stoutest hearts that e'er
To Love were rebels; from those feet so fair,
From her whole form, for Eden only meet,
My spirit took its life—now these delight
The King of Heaven and his angelic train,
While, blind and naked, I am left in night.
One only balm expect I 'mid my pain—
That she, mine every thought who now can see,
May win this grace—that I with her may be. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXVIII.

E' mi par d' or in ora udire il messo.

HE FEELS THAT THE DAY OF THEIR REUNION IS AT HAND.

METHINKS from hour to hour her voice I hear:
My Lady calls me! I would fain obey;
Within, without, I feel myself decay;
And am so alter'd—not with many a year—
That to myself a stranger I appear;
All my old usual life is put away—
Could I but know how long I have to stay!
Grant, Heaven, the long-wish'd summons may be near!
Oh, blest the day when from this earthly gaol
I shall be freed, when burst and broken lies

This mortal guise, so heavy yet so frail,
When from this black night my saved spirit flies,
Soaring up, up, above the bright serene,
Where with my Lord my Lady shall be seen. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXIX.

L' aura mia sacra al mio stanco riposo.

HE TELLS HER IN SLEEP OF HIS SUFFERINGS, AND, OVERCOME BY HER SYMPATHY, AWAKES.

ON my oft-troubled sleep my sacred air
So softly breathes, at last I courage take,
To tell her of my past and present ache,
Which never in her life my heart did dare.
I first that glance so full of love declare
Which served my lifelong torment to awake,
Next, how, content and wretched for her sake,
Love day by day my tost heart knew to tear.
She speaks not, but, with pity's dewy trace,
Intently looks on me, and gently sighs,
While pure and lustrous tears begem her face;
My spirit, which her sorrow fiercely tries,
So to behold her weep with anger burns,
And freed from slumber to itself returns MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXX.

Ogni giorno mi par più di mill' anni.

FAR FROM FEARING, HE PRAYS FOR DEATH.

EACH day to me seems as a thousand years,
That I my dear and faithful star pursue,
Who guided me on earth, and guides me too
By a sure path to life without its tears.
For in the world, familiar now, appears
No snare to tempt; so rare a light and true
Shines e'en from heaven my secret conscience through,
Of lost time and loved sin the glass it rears.
Not that I need the threats of death to dread,
(Which He who loved us bore with greater pain)
That, firm and constant, I his path should tread:
'Tis but a brief while since in every vein
Of her he enter'd who my fate has been,
Yet troubled not the least her brow serene. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXXI.

Non può far morte il dolce viso amaro.

SINCE HER DEATH HE HAS CEASED TO LIVE.

DEATH cannot make that beauteous face less fair,
But that sweet face may lend to death a grace;
My spirit's guide! from her each good I trace;
Who learns to die, may seek his lesson there.
That holy one! who not his blood would spare,
But did the dark Tartarean bolts unbrace;
He, too, doth from my soul death's terrors chase:
Then welcome, death! thy impress I would wear.
And linger not! 'tis time that I had fled;
Alas! my stay hath little here avail'd,
Since she, my Laura blest, resign'd her breath:
Life's spring in me hath since that hour lain dead,
In her I lived, my life in hers exhaled,
The hour she died I felt within me death! WOLLASTON.

CANZONE VI.

Quando il soave mio fido conforto.

SHE APPEARS TO HIM, AND, WITH MORE THAN WONTED AFFECTION, ENDEAVOURS TO CONSOLE HIM.

WHEN she, the faithful soother of my pain,
This life's long weary pilgrimage to cheer,
Vouchsafes beside my nightly couch to appear,
With her sweet speech attempering reason's strain;
O'ercome by tenderness, and terror vain,
I cry, "Whence comest thou, O spirit blest?"
She from her beauteous breast
A branch of laurel and of palm displays,
And, answering, thus she says:
"From th' empyrean seat of holy love
Alone thy sorrows to console I move."

In actions, and in words, in humble guise
I speak my thanks, and ask, "How may it be
That thou shouldst know my wretched state?" and she:
"Thy floods of tears perpetual, and thy sighs
Breathed forth unceasing, to high heaven arise,
And there disturb my blissful state serene;
So grievous hath it been,

That freed from this poor being, I at last
To a better life have pass'd,
Which should have joy'd thee hadst thou loved as well
As thy sad brow, and sadder numbers tell."

"Oh! not thy ills, I but deplore my own,
In darkness, and in grief remaining here,
Certain that thou hast reach'd the highest sphere,
As of a thing that man hath seen and known.
Would God and Nature to the world have shown
Such virtue in a young and gentle breast,
Were not eternal rest
The appointed guerdon of a life so fair?
Thou! of the spirits rare,
Who, from a course unspotted, pure and high,
Are suddenly translated to the sky.

"But I! how can I cease to weep? forlorn,
Without thee nothing, wretched, desolate!
Oh, in the cradle had I met my fate,
Or at the breast! and not to love been born!"
And she: "Why by consuming grief thus worn?
Were it not better spread aloft thy wings,
And now all mortal things,
With these thy sweet and idle fantasies,
At their just value prize,
And follow me, if true thy tender vows,
Gathering henceforth with me these honour'd boughs?"

Then answering her:—"Fain would I, thou shouldst say
What these two verdant branches signify."
"Methinks," she says, "thou may'st thyself reply,
Whose pen has graced the one by many a lay.
The palm shows victory; and in youth's bright day
I overcame the world, and my weak heart:
The triumph mine in part,
Glory to Him who made my weakness strength!
And thou, yet turn at length!
'Gainst other powers his gracious aid implore,
That we may be with Him thy trial o'er!"

"Are these the crispèd locks, and links of gold
That bind me still? And these the radiant eyes,
To me the Sun?" "Err not with the unwise,

Nor think," she says, "as they are wont. Behold
In me a spirit, among the blest enroll'd;
Thou seek'st what hath long been earth again:
Yet to relieve thy pain
'Tis given me thus to appear, ere I resume
That beauty from the tomb,
More loved, that I, severe in pity, win
Thy soul with mine to Heaven, from death and sin."

I weep; and she my cheek,
Soft sighing, with her own fair hand will dry;
And, gently chiding, speak
In tones of power to rive hard rocks in twain;
Then vanishing, sleep follows in her train. DACRE.

CANZONE VII.

Quell' antiquo mio dolce empio signore.

LOVE, SUMMONED BY THE POET TO THE TRIBUNAL OF REASON, PASSES A SPLENDID EULOGIUM ON LAURA.

LONG had I suffer'd, till—to combat more
In strength, in hope too sunk—at last before
Impartial Reason's seat,
Whence she presides our nobler nature o'er,
I summon'd my old tyrant, stern and sweet;
There, groaning 'neath a weary weight of grief,
With fear and horror stung,
Like one who dreads to die and prays relief,
My plea I open'd thus: "When life was young,
I, weakly, placed my peace within his power,
And nothing from that hour
Save wrong I've met; so many and so great
The torments I have borne,
That my once infinite patience is outworn,
And my life worthless grown is held in very hate!

"Thus sadly has my time till now dragg'd by
In flames and anguish: I have left each way
Of honour, use, and joy,
This my most cruel flatterer to obey.
What wit so rare such language to employ

That yet may free me from this wretched thrall,
Or even my complaint,
So great and just, against this ingrate paint?
O little sweet! much bitterness and gall!
How have you changed my life, so tranquil, ere
With the false witchery blind,
That alone lured me to his amorous snare!
If right I judge, a mind
I boasted once with higher feelings rife,
—But he destroy'd my peace, he plunged me in this strife!

"Less for myself to care, through him I've grown,
And less my God to honour than I ought:
Through him my every thought
On a frail beauty blindly have I thrown;
In this my counsellor he stood alone,
Still prompt with cruel aid so to provoke
My young desire, that I
Hoped respite from his harsh and heavy yoke.
But, ah! what boots—though changing time sweep by,
If from this changeless passion nought can save—
A genius proud and high?
Or what Heaven's other envied gifts to have,
If still I groan the slave
Of the fierce despot whom I here accuse,
Who turns e'en my sad life to his triumphant use?

"'Twas he who made me desert countries seek,
Wild tribes and nations dangerous, manners rude;
My path with thorns he strew'd,
And every error that betrays the weak.
Valley and mountain, marsh, and stream, and sea,
On every side his snares were set for me.
In June December came,
With present peril and sharp toil the same;
Alone they left me never, neither he,
Nor she, whom I so fled, my other foe:
Untimely in my tomb,
If by some painful death not yet laid low,
My safety from such doom
Heaven's gracious pity, not this tyrant, deigns,
Who feeds upon my grief, and profits in my pains!

"No quiet hour, since first I own'd his reign,
I've known, nor hope to know: repose is fled
From my unfriendly bed,
Nor herb nor spells can bring it back again.
By fraud and force he gain'd and guards his power
O'er every sense; soundeth from steeple near,
By day, by night, the hour,
I feel his hand in every stroke I hear.
Never did cankerworm fair tree devour,
As he my heart, wherein he, gnawing, lurks,
And, there, my ruin works.
Hence my past martyrdom and tears arise,
My present speech, these sighs,
Which tear and tire myself, and haply thee,
—Judge then between us both, thou knowest him and me!"

With fierce reproach my adversary rose:
"Lady," he spoke, "the rebel to a close
Is heard at last, the truth
Receive from me which he has shrunk to tell:
Big words to bandy, specious lies to sell,
He plies right well the vile trade of his youth,
Freed from whose shame, to share
My easy pleasures, by my friendly care,
From each false passion which had work'd him ill,
Kept safe and pure, laments he, graceless, still
The sweet life he has gain'd?
And, blindly, thus his fortune dares he blame,
Who owes his very fame
To me, his genius who sublimed, sustain'd,
In the proud flight to which he, else, had dared not aim?

"Well knows he how, in history's every page,
The laurell'd chief, the monarch on his throne,
The poet and the sage,
Favourites of fortune, or for virtue known,
Were cursed by evil stars, in loves debased,
Soulless and vile, their hearts, their fame, to waste:
While I, for him alone,
From all the lovely ladies of the earth,
Chose one, so graced with beauty and with worth,
The eternal sun her equal ne'er beheld.

Such charm was in her life,
Such virtue in her speech with music rife,
Their wondrous power dispell'd
Each vain and vicious fancy from his heart,
—A foe I am indeed, if this a foeman's part!

"Such was my anger, these my hate and slights,
Than all which others could bestow more sweet·
Evil for good I meet,
If thus ingratitude my grace requites.
So high, upon my wings, he soar'd in fame,
To hear his song, fair dames and gentle knights
In throngs delighted came.
Among the gifted spirits of our time
His name conspicuous shines; in every clime
Admired, approved, his strains an echo find.
Such is he, but for me
A mere court flatterer who was doom'd to be,
Unmark'd amid his kind,
Till, in my school, exalted and made known
By her, who, of her sex, stood peerless and alone!

"If my great service more there need to tell,
I have so fenced and fortified him well,
That his pure mind on nought
Of gross or grovelling now can brook to dwell;
Modest and sensitive, in deed, word, thought,
Her captive from his youth, she so her fair
And virtuous image press'd
Upon his heart, it left its likeness there:
Whate'er his life has shown of good or great,
In aim or action, he from us possess'd.
Never was midnight dream
So full of error as to us his hate!
For Heaven's and man's esteem
If still he keep, the praise is due to us,
Whom in its thankless pride his blind rage censures thus!

"In fine, 'twas I, my past love to exceed,
Who heavenward fix'd his hope, who gave him wings
To fly from mortal things,
Which to eternal bliss the path impede;

With his own sense, that, seeing how in her
Virtues and charms so great and rare combined,
A holy pride might stir
And to the Great First Cause exalt his mind,
(In his own verse confess'd this truth we see,)
While that dear lady whom I sent to be
The grace, the guard, and guide
Of his vain life"——But here a heart-deep groan
I sudden gave, and cried,
"Yes! sent and snatch'd her from me." He replied,
"Not I, but Heaven above, which will'd her for its own!"

At length before that high tribunal each—
With anxious trembling I, while in his mien
Was conscious triumph seen—
With earnest prayer concluded thus his speech:
"Speak, noble lady! we thy judgment wait."
She then with equal air:
"It glads me to have heard your keen debate,
But in a cause so great,
More time and thought it needs just verdict to declare!"

MACGREGOR.

[OF PARTS ONLY.]

I CITED once t' appear before the noble queen, [seen,
That ought to guide each mortal life that in this world is
That pleasant cruel foe that robbeth hearts of ease,
And now doth frown, and then doth fawn, and can both grieve and please;
And there, as gold in fire full fined to each intent,
Charged with fear, and terror eke I did myself present,
As one that doubted death, and yet did justice crave,
And thus began t' unfold my cause in hope some help to have.

"Madam, in tender youth I enter'd first this reign,
Where other sweet I never felt, than grief and great disdain;
And eke so sundry kinds of torments did endure,
As life I loathed, and death desired my cursèd case to cure;
And thus my woeful days unto this hour have pass'd
In smoky sighs and scalding tears, my wearied life to waste;

O Lord! what graces great I fled, and eke refused
To serve this cruel crafty Sire that doubtless trust abused."

"What wit can use such words to argue and debate,
What tongue express the full effect of mine unhappy state;
What hand with pen can paint t' uncipher this deceit;
What heart so hard that would not yield that once hath seen his bate;
What great and grievous wrongs, what threats of ill success,
What single sweet, mingled with mass of double bitterness.
With what unpleasant pangs, with what an hoard of pains,
Hath he acquainted my green years by his false pleasant trains."

"Who by resistless power hath forced me sue his dance,
That if I be not much abused had found much better chance;
And when I most resolved to lead most quiet life,
He spoil'd me of discordless state, and thrust me in truceless strife.
He hath bewitch'd me so that God the less I served,
And due respect unto myself the further from me swerv'd;
He hath the love of one so painted in my thought,
That other thing I can none mind, nor care for as I ought.
And all this comes from him, both counsel and the cause,
That whet my young desire so much to th' honour of his laws."

HARINGTON MS.

SONNET LXXXII.

Dicemi spesso il mio fidato speglio.

HE AWAKES TO A CONVICTION OF THE NEAR APPROACH OF DEATH.

My faithful mirror oft to me has told—
My weary spirit and my shrivell'd skin
My failing powers to prove it all begin—
"Deceive thyself no longer, thou art old."
Man is in all by Nature best controll'd,
And if with her we struggle, time creeps in;
At the sad truth, on fire as waters win,
A long and heavy sleep is off me roll'd;
And I see clearly our vain life depart,
That more than once our being cannot be;
Her voice sounds ever in my inmost heart,
Who now from her fair earthly frame is free;

She walk'd the world so peerless and alone,
Its fame and lustre all with her are flown. MACGREGOR.

THE mirror'd friend—my changing form hath read,
My every power's incipient decay—
My wearied soul—alike, in warning say
"Thyself no more deceive, thy youth hath fled."
'Tis ever best to be by Nature led,
We strive with her, and Death makes us his prey;
At that dread thought, as flames the waters stay,
The dream is gone my life hath sadly fed.
I wake to feel how soon existence flies:
Once known, 'tis gone, and never to return.
Still vibrates in my heart the thrilling tone
Of her, who now her beauteous shrine defies:
But she, who here to rival, none could learn,
Hath robb'd her sex, and with its fame hath flown.

WOLLASTON.

SONNET LXXXIII.

Volo con l' ali de' pensieri al cielo.

HE SEEMS TO BE WITH HER IN HEAVEN.

So often on the wings of thought I fly
Up to heaven's blissful seats, that I appear
As one of those whose treasure is lodged there,
The rent veil of mortality thrown by.
A pleasing chillness thrills my heart, while I
Listen to her voice, who bids me paleness wear—
"Ah! now, my friend, I love thee, now revere,
For changed thy face, thy manners," doth she cry.
She leads me to her Lord: and then I bow,
Preferring humble prayer, He would allow
That I his glorious face, and hers might see.
Thus He replies: "Thy destiny's secure;
To stay some twenty, or some ten years more,
Is but a little space, though long it seems to thee." NOTT.

SONNET LXXXIV.

Morte ha spento quel Sol ch' abbagliar suolmi.

WEARY OF LIFE, NOW THAT SHE IS NO LONGER WITH HIM, HE DEVOTES HIMSELF TO GOD.

DEATH has the bright sun quench'd which wont to burn;
Her pure and constant eyes his dark realms hold:

She now is dust, who dealt me heat and cold;
To common trees my chosen laurels turn;
Hence I at once my bliss and bane discern.
None now there is my feelings who can mould
From fire to frost, from timorous to bold,
In grief to languish or with hope to yearn.
Out of his tyrant hands who harms and heals,
Erewhile who made in it such havoc sore,
My heart the bitter-sweet of freedom feels.
And to the Lord whom, thankful, I adore,
The heavens who ruleth merely with his brow,
I turn life-weary, if not satiate, now. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXXV.

Tennemi Amor anni ventuno ardendo.

HE CONFESSES AND REGRETS HIS SINS, AND PRAYS GOD TO SAVE HIM FROM ETERNAL DEATH.

LOVE held me one and twenty years enchain'd,
His flame was joy—for hope was in my grief!
For ten more years I wept without relief,
When Laura with my heart, to heaven attain'd.
Now weary grown, my life I had arraign'd
That in its error, check'd (to my belief)
Blest virtue's seeds—now, in my yellow leaf,
I grieve the misspent years, existence stain'd.
Alas! it might have sought a brighter goal,
In flying troublous thoughts, and winning peace;
O Father! I repentant seek thy throne:
Thou, in this temple hast enshrined my soul,
Oh, bless me yet, and grant its safe release!
Unjustified—my sin I humbly own. WOLLASTON.

SONNET LXXXVI.

I' vo piangendo i miei passati tempi.

HE HUMBLY CONFESSES THE ERRORS OF HIS PAST LIFE, AND PRAYS FOR DIVINE GRACE.

WEEPING, I still revolve the seasons flown
In vain idolatry of mortal things;
Not soaring heavenward; though my soul had wings

Which might, perchance, a glorious flight have shown.
O Thou, discerner of the guilt I own,
Giver of life immortal, King of Kings,
Heal Thou the wounded heart which conscience stings:
It looks for refuge only to thy throne.
Thus, although life was warfare and unrest,
Be death the haven of peace; and if my day
Was vain—yet make the parting moment blest!
Through this brief remnant of my earthly way,
And in death's billows, be thy hand confess'd;
Full well Thou know'st, this hope is all my stay!

SHEPPARD.

STILL do I mourn the years for aye gone by,
Which on a mortal love I lavishèd,
Nor e'er to soar my pinions balancèd,
Though wing'd perchance no humble height to fly.
Thou, Dread Invisible, who from on high
Look'st down upon this suffering erring head,
Oh, be thy succour to my frailty sped,
And with thy grace my indigence supply!
My life in storms and warfare doom'd to spend,
Harbour'd in peace that life may I resign:
It's course though idle, pious be its end!
Oh, for the few brief days, which yet are mine,
And for their close, thy guiding hand extend!
Thou know'st on Thee alone my heart's firm hopes recline.

WRANGHAM.

SONNET LXXXVII.

Dolci durezze e placide repulse.

HE OWES HIS OWN SALVATION TO THE VIRTUOUS CONDUCT OF LAURA.

O SWEET severity, repulses mild,
With chasten'd love, and tender pity fraught;
Graceful rebukes, that to mad passion taught
Becoming mastery o'er its wishes wild;
Speech dignified, in which, united, smiled
All courtesy, with purity of thought;
Virtue and beauty, that uprooted aught
Of baser temper had my heart defiled;

Eyes, in whose glance man is beatified—
Awful, in pride of virtue, to restrain
Aspiring hopes that justly are denied,
Then prompt the drooping spirit to sustain!
These, beautiful in every change, supplied
Health to my soul, that else were sought in vain. DACRE.

SONNET LXXXVIII.

Spirto felice, che sì dolcemente.

BEHOLDING IN FANCY THE SHADE OF LAURA, HE TELLS HER THE LOSS THAT THE WORLD SUSTAINED IN HER DEPARTURE.

BLEST spirit, that with beams so sweetly clear
Those eyes didst bend on me, than stars more bright,
And sighs didst breathe, and words which could delight
Despair; and which in fancy still I hear;—
I see thee now, radiant from thy pure sphere
O'er the soft grass, and violet's purple light,
Move, as an angel to my wondering sight;
More present than earth gave thee to appear.
Yet to the Cause Supreme thou art return'd:
And left, here to dissolve, that beauteous veil
In which indulgent Heaven invested thee.
Th' impoverish'd world at thy departure mourn'd:
For love departed, and the sun grew pale,
And death then seem'd our sole felicity. CAPEL LOFFT.

O BLESSED Spirit! who those sun-like eyes
So sweetly didst inform and brightly fill,
Who the apt words didst frame and tender sighs
Which in my fond heart have their echo still:
Erewhile I saw thee, glowing with chaste flame,
Thy feet 'mid violets and verdure set,
Moving in angel not in mortal frame,
Life-like and light, before me present yet!
Her, when returning with thy God to dwell,
Thou didst relinquish and that fair veil given
For purpose high by fortune's grace to thee;
Love at thy parting bade the world farewell;
Courtesy died; the sun abandon'd heaven,
And Death himself our best friend 'gan to be. MACGREGOR.

SONNET LXXXIX.

Deh porgi mano all' affannato ingegno.

HE BEGS LOVE TO ASSIST HIM, THAT HE MAY WORTHILY CELEBRATE HER.

AH, Love! some succour to my weak mind deign,
Lend to my frail and weary style thine aid,
To sing of her who is immortal made,
A citizen of the celestial reign.
And grant, Lord, that my verse the height may gain
Of her great praises, else in vain essay'd,
Whose peer in worth or beauty never stay'd
In this our world, unworthy to retain.
Love answers: "In myself and Heaven what lay,
By conversation pure and counsel wise,
All was in her whom death has snatch'd away.
Since the first morn when Adam oped his eyes,
Like form was ne'er—suffice it this to say,
Write down with tears what scarce I tell for sighs."

MACGREGOR.

SONNET XC.

Vago augelletto che cantando vai.

THE PLAINTIVE SONG OF A BIRD RECALLS TO HIM HIS OWN KEENER SORROW.

POOR solitary bird, that pour'st thy lay,
Or haply mournest the sweet season gone:
As chilly night and winter hurry on,
And day-light fades and summer flies away;
If as the cares that swell thy little throat
Thou knew'st alike the woes that wound my rest,
Ah, thou wouldst house thee in this kindred breast,
And mix with mine thy melancholy note.
Yet little know I ours are kindred ills:
She still may live the object of thy song:
Not so for me stern death or Heaven wills!
But the sad season, and less grateful hour,
And of past joy and sorrow thoughts that throng
Prompt my full heart this idle lay to pour.

DACRE.

SWEET bird, that singest on thy airy way,
Or else bewailest pleasures that are past;
What time the night draws nigh, and wintry blast;
Leaving behind each merry month, and day;

Oh, couldst thou, as thine own, my state survey,
With the same gloom of misery o'ercast;
Unto my bosom thou mightst surely haste,
And, by partaking, my sad griefs allay.
Yet would thy share of woe not equal mine,
Since the loved mate thou weep'st doth haply live,
While death, and heaven, me of my fair deprive:
But hours less gay, the season's drear decline;
With thoughts on many a sad, and pleasant year,
Tempt me to ask thy piteous presence here. NOTT.

CANZONE VIII.

Vergine bella che di sol vestita.

TO THE VIRGIN MARY.

BEAUTIFUL Virgin! clothed with the sun,
Crown'd with the stars, who so the Eternal Sun
Well pleasedst that in thine his light he hid;
Love pricks me on to utter speech of thee,
And—feeble to commence without thy aid—
Of Him who on thy bosom rests in love.
Her I invoke who gracious still replies
To all who ask in faith,
Virgin! if ever yet
The misery of man and mortal things
To mercy moved thee, to my prayer incline;
Help me in this my strife,
Though I am but of dust, and thou heaven's radiant Queen!

Wise Virgin! of that lovely number one
Of Virgins blest and wise,
Even the first and with the brightest lamp:
O solid buckler of afflicted hearts!
'Neath which against the blows of Fate and Death,
Not mere deliverance but great victory is;
Relief from the blind ardour which consumes
Vain mortals here below!
Virgin! those lustrous eyes,
Which tearfully beheld the cruel prints
In the fair limbs of thy beloved Son,
Ah! turn on my sad doubt,
Who friendless, helpless thus, for counsel come to thee!

O Virgin! pure and perfect in each part,
Maiden or Mother, from thy honour'd birth,
This life to lighten and the next adorn;
O bright and lofty gate of open'd heaven!
By thee, thy Son and His, the Almighty Sire,
In our worst need to save us came below:
And, from amid all other earthly seats,
Thou only wert elect,
Virgin supremely blest!
The tears of Eve who turnedst into joy;
Make me, thou canst, yet worthy of his grace,
O happy without end,
Who art in highest heaven a saint immortal shrined!

O holy Virgin! full of every good,
Who, in humility most deep and true,
To heaven art mounted, thence my prayers to hear,
That fountain thou of pity didst produce,
That sun of justice light, which calms and clears
Our age, else clogg'd with errors dark and foul.
Three sweet and precious names in thee combine,
Of mother, daughter, wife,
Virgin! with glory crown'd,
Queen of that King who has unloosed our bonds,
And free and happy made the world again,
By whose most sacred wounds,
I pray my heart to fix where true joys only are!

Virgin! of all unparallel'd, alone,
Who with thy beauties hast enamour'd Heaven,
Whose like has never been, nor e'er shall be;
For holy thoughts with chaste and pious acts
To the true God a sacred living shrine
In thy fecund virginity have made:
By thee, dear Mary, yet my life may be
Happy, if to thy prayers,
O Virgin meek and mild!
Where sin abounded grace shall more abound!
With bended knee and broken heart I pray
That thou my guide wouldst be,
And to such prosperous end direct my faltering way;

Bright Virgin! and immutable as bright,
O'er life's tempestuous ocean the sure star
Each trusting mariner that truly guides,
Look down, and see amid this dreadful storm
How I am tost at random and alone,
And how already my last shriek is near,
Yet still in thee, sinful although and vile,
My soul keeps all her trust;
Virgin! I thee implore
Let not thy foe have triumph in my fall;
Remember that our sin made God himself,
To free us from its chain,
Within thy virgin womb our image on Him take!

Virgin! what tears already have I shed,
Cherish'd what dreams and breathed what prayers in vain,
But for my own worse penance and sure loss;
Since first on Arno's shore I saw the light
Till now, whate'er I sought, wherever turn'd,
My life has pass'd in torment and in tears,
For mortal loveliness in air, act, speech,
Has seized and soil'd my soul:
O Virgin! pure and good,
Delay not till I reach my life's last year;
Swifter than shaft and shuttle are, my days
'Mid misery and sin
Have vanish'd all, and now Death only is behind!

Virgin! She now is dust, who, living, held
My heart in grief, and plunged it since in gloom;
She knew not of my many ills this one,
And had she known, what since befell me still
Had been the same, for every other wish
Was death to me and ill renown for her;
But, Queen of heaven, our Goddess—if to thee
Such homage be not sin—
Virgin! of matchless mind,
Thou knowest now the whole; and that, which else
No other can, is nought to thy great power:
Deign then my grief to end,
Thus honour shall be thine, and safe my peace at last!

Virgin! in whom I fix my every hope,
Who canst and will'st assist me in great need,
Forsake me not in this my worst extreme,
Regard not me but Him who made me thus;
Let his high image stamp'd on my poor worth
Towards one so low and lost thy pity move:
Medusa spells have made me as a rock
Distilling a vain flood;
Virgin! my harass'd heart
With pure and pious tears do thou fulfil,
That its last sigh at least may be devout,
And free from earthly taint,
As was my earliest vow ere madness fill'd my veins!

Virgin! benevolent, and foe of pride,
Ah! let the love of our one Author win,
Some mercy for a contrite humble heart:
For, if her poor frail mortal dust I loved
With loyalty so wonderful and long,
Much more my faith and gratitude for thee.
From this my present sad and sunken state
If by thy help I rise,
Virgin! to thy dear name
I consecrate and cleanse my thoughts, speech, pen,
My mind, and heart with all its tears and sighs;
Point then that better path,
And with complacence view my changed desires at last.

The day must come, nor distant far its date,
Time flies so swift and sure,
O peerless and alone!
When death my heart, now conscience struck, shall seize:
Commend me, Virgin! then to thy dear Son,
True God and Very Man,
That my last sigh in peace may, in his arms, be breathed!

MACGREGOR.

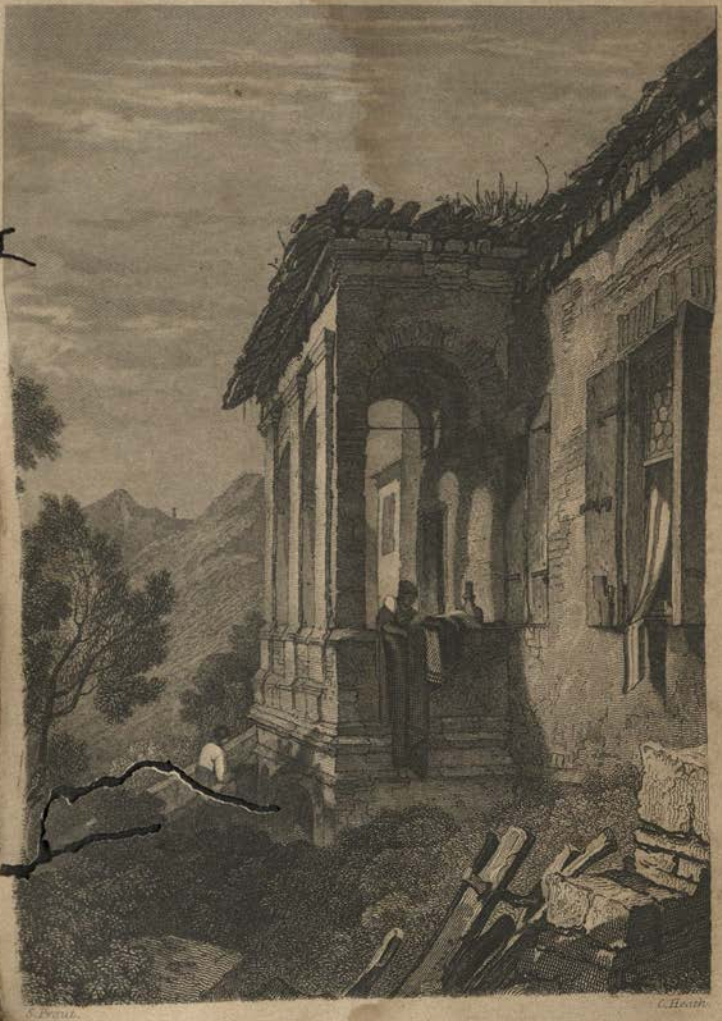
PETRARCH'S TRIUMPHS.

THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE.

PART I.

Nel tempo che rinova i miei sospiri.

It was the time when I do sadly pay
My sighs, in tribute to that sweet-sour day,
Which first gave being to my tedious woes;
The sun now o'er the Bull's horns proudly goes,
And Phaëton had renew'd his wonted race;
When Love, the season, and my own ill case,
Drew me that solitary place to find,
In which I oft unload my chargèd mind:
There, tired with raving thoughts and helpless moan,
Sleep seal'd my eyes up, and, my senses gone,
My waking fancy spied a shining light,
In which appear'd long pain, and short delight.
A mighty General I then did see,
Like one, who, for some glorious victory,
Should to the Capitol in triumph go:
I (who had not been used to such a show
In this soft age, where we no valour have,
But pride) admired his habit, strange and brave,
And having raised mine eyes, which wearied were,
To understand this sight was all my care.
Four snowy steeds a fiery chariot drew;
There sat the cruel boy; a threatening yew
His right hand bore, his quiver arrows held,
Against whose force no helm or shield prevail'd.
Two party-colour'd wings his shoulders ware;
All naked else; and round about his chair
Were thousand mortals: some in battle ta'en,
Many were hurt with darts, and many slain.
Glad to learn news, I rose, and forward press'd
So far, that I was one amongst the rest;



S. Prout. C. Heath.

PETRARCH'S HOUSE AT ARQUA.

As if I had been kill'd with loving pain
Before my time; and looking through the train
Of this tear-thirsty king, I would have spied
Some of my old acquaintance, but descried
No face I knew: if any such there were,
They were transform'd with prison, death, and care.
At last one ghost, less sad than th' others, came,
Who, near approaching, call'd me by my name,
And said: "This comes of Love." "What may you be,"
I answer'd, wondering much, "that thus know me?
For I remember not t' have seen your face."
He thus replied: "It is the dusky place
That dulls thy sight, and this hard yoke I bear:
Else I a Tuscan am; thy friend, and dear
To thy remembrance." His wonted phrase
And voice did then discover what he was.
So we retired aside, and left the throng,
When thus he spake: "I have expected long
To see you here with us; your face did seem
To threaten you no less. I do esteem
Your prophesies; but I have seen what care
Attends a lover's life; and must beware."
"Yet have I oft been beaten in the field,
And sometimes hurt," said I, "but scorn'd to yield."
He smiled and said: "Alas! thou dost not see,
My son, how great a flame's prepared for thee."
I knew not then what by his words he meant:
But since I find it by the dire event;
And in my memory 'tis fix'd so fast,
That marble gravings cannot firmer last.
Meanwhile my forward youth did thus inquire:
"What may these people be? I much desire
To know their names; pray, give me leave to ask."
"I think 'ere long 'twill be a needless task,"
Replied my friend; "thou shalt be of the train,
And know them all; this captivating chain
Thy neck must bear, (though thou dost little fear,)
And sooner change thy comely form and hair,
Than be unfetter'd from the cruel tie,
Howe'er thou struggle for thy liberty;
Yet to fulfil thy wish, I will relate
What I have learn'd. The first that keeps such state,

By whom our lives and freedoms we forego,
The world hath call'd him Love; and he (you know,
But shall know better when he comes to be
A lord to you, as now he is to me)
Is in his childhood mild, fierce in his age;
'Tis best believed of those that feel his rage.
The truth of this thou in thyself shalt find,
I warn thee now, pray keep it in thy mind.
Of idle looseness he is oft the child;
With pleasant fancies nourish'd, and is styled
Or made a god by vain and foolish men:
And for a recompense, some meet their bane;
Others, a harder slavery must endure
Than many thousand chains and bolts procure.
That other gallant lord is conqueror
Of conquering Rome, led captive by the fair
Egyptian queen, with her persuasive art,
Who in his honours claims the greatest part;
For binding the world's victor with her charms,
His trophies are all hers by right of arms.
The next is his adoptive son, whose love
May seem more just, but doth no better prove;
For though he did his lovèd Livia wed,
She was seducèd from her husband's bed.
Nero is third, disdainful, wicked, fierce,
And yet a woman found a way to pierce
His angry soul. Behold, Marcus, the grave
Wise emperor, is fair Faustina's slave.
These two are tyrants: Dionysius,
And Alexander, both suspicious,
And yet both loved: the last a just reward
Found of his causeless fear. I know y' have heard
Of him, who for Creüsa on the rock
Antandrus mourn'd so long; whose warlike stroke
At once revenged his friend and won his love:
And of the youth whom Phædra could not move
T' abuse his father's bed; he left the place,
And by his virtue lost his life (for base
Unworthy loves to rage do quickly change).
It kill'd her too; perhaps in just revenge
Of wrong'd Theseus, slain Hippolytus,
And poor forsaken Ariadne: thus

It often proves that they who falsely blame
Another, in one breath themselves condemn:
And who have guilty been of treachery,
Need not complain, if they deceivèd be.
Behold the brave hero a captive made
With all his fame, and 'twixt these sisters led:
Who, as he joy'd the death of th' one to see,
His death did ease the other's misery.
The next that followeth, though the world admire
His strength, Love bound him. Th' other full of ire
Is great Achilles, he whose pitied fate
Was caused by Love. Demophoon did not hate
Impatient Phyllis, yet procured her death.
This Jason is, he whom Medea hath
Obliged by mischief; she to her father proved
False, to her brother cruel; t' him she loved
Grew furious, by her merit over-prized.
Hypsipyle comes next, mournful, despised,
Wounded to see a stranger's love prevail
More than her own, a Greek. Here is the frail
Fair Helena, with her the shepherd boy,
Whose gazing looks hurt Greece, and ruin'd Troy.
'Mongst other weeping souls, you hear the moan
Œnone makes, her Paris being gone;
And Menelaus, for the woe he had
To lose his wife. Hermione is sad,
And calls her dear Orestes to her aid.
And Laodamia, that hapless maid,
Bewails Protesilaus. Argia proved
To Polynice more faithful than the loved
(But false and covetous) Amphiaraus' wife.
The groans and sighs of those who lose their life
By this kind lord, in unrelenting flames
You hear: I cannot tell you half their names,
For they appear not only men that love,
The gods themselves do fill this myrtle grove:
You see fair Venus caught by Vulcan's art
With angry Mars: Proserpina apart
From Pluto, jealous Juno, yellow-hair'd
Apollo, who the young god's courage dared;
And of his trophies proud, laugh'd at the bow,
Which in Thessalia gave him such a blow.

What shall I say?—here, in a word, are all
The gods that Varro mentions, great and small;
Each with innumerable bonds detain'd,
And Jupiter before the chariot chain'd." ANNA HUME.

PART II.

Stanca già di mirar, non sazio ancora.

WEARIED, not satisfied, with much delight,
Now here, now there, I turn'd my greedy sight,
And many things I view'd: to write were long,
The time is short, great store of passions throng
Within my breast; when lo, a lovely pair,
Join'd hand in hand, who kindly talking were,
Drew my attention that way: their attire
And foreign language quicken'd my desire
Of further knowledge, which I soon might gain.
My kind interpreter did all explain.
When both I knew, I boldly then drew near;
He loved our country, though she made it fear.
"O Masinissa! I adjure thee by
Great Scipio, and her who from thine eye
Drew manly tears," said I; "let it not be
A trouble, what I must demand of thee."
He look'd, and said: "I first desire to know
Your name and quality; for well you show
Y' have heard the combat in my wounded soul,
When Love did Friendship, Friendship Love control."
"I am not worth your knowledge, my poor flame
Gives little light," said I: "your royal fame
Sets hearts on fire, that never see your face:
But, pray you, say; are you two led in peace
By him?"—(I show'd their guide)—"Your history
Deserves record: it seemeth strange to me,
That faith and cruelty should come so near."
He said: "Thine own expressions witness bear,
Thou know'st enough, yet I will all relate
To thee; 't will somewhat ease my heavy state.
On that brave man my heart was fix'd so much,
That Lælius' love to him could be but such;
Where'er his colours marchèd, I was nigh,
And Fortune did attend with victory:

Yet still his merit call'd for more than she
Could give, or any else deserve but he.
When to the West the Roman eagles came
Myself was also there, and caught a flame,
A purer never burnt in lover's breast:
But such a joy could not be long possess'd!
Our nuptial knot, alas! he soon untied,
Who had more power than all the world beside.
He cared not for our sighs; and though 't be true
That he divided us, his worth I knew:
He must be blind that cannot see the sun,
But by strict justice Love is quite undone:
Counsel from such a friend gave such a stroke
To love, it almost split, as on a rock:
For as my father I his wrath did fear,
And as a son he in my love was dear;
Brothers in age we were, him I obey'd,
But with a troubled soul and look dismay'd:
Thus my dear half had an untimely death,
She prized her freedom far above her breath;
And I th' unhappy instrument was made;
Such force th' intreaty and intreater had!
I rather chose myself than him t' offend,
And sent the poison brought her to her end:
With what sad thoughts I know, and she'll confess,
And you, if you have sense of love, may guess;
No heir she left me, but my tedious moan;
And though in her my hopes and joys were gone,
She was of lower value than my faith!
But now farewell, and try if this troop hath
Another wonder; for the time is less
Than is the task." I pitied their distress,
Whose short joy ended in so sharp a woe:
My soft heart melted. As they onward go,
"This youth for his part, I perhaps could love,"
She said; "but nothing can my mind remove
From hatred of the nation." He replied,
"Good Sophonisba, you may leave this pride;
Your city hath by us been three times beat,
The last of which, you know, we laid it flat."
"Pray use these words t' another, not to me,"
Said she; "if Africk mournèd Italy

Needs not rejoice; search your records, and there
See what you gainèd by the Punic war."
He that was friend to both, without reply
A little smiling, vanish'd from mine eye
Amongst the crowd. As one in doubtful way
At every step looks round, and fears to stray
(Care stops his journey), so the varied store
Of lovers stay'd me, to examine more,
And try what kind of fire burnt every breast:
When on my left hand strayèd from the rest
Was one, whose look express'd a ready mind
In seeking what he joy'd, yet shamed to find;
He freely gave away his dearest wife
(A new-found way to save a lover's life);
She, though she joy'd, yet blushèd at the change.
As they recounted their affections strange,
And for their Syria mourn'd; I took the way
Of these three ghosts, who seem'd their course to stay,
And take another path: the first I held
And bid him turn; he started, and beheld
Me with a troubled look, hearing my tongue
Was Roman, such a pause he made as sprung
From some deep thought; then spake as if inspired,
For to my wish, he told what I desired
To know: "Seleucus is," said he, "my name,
This is Antiochus my son, whose fame
Hath reach'd your ear; he warrèd much with Rome,
But reason oft by power is overcome.
This woman, once my wife, doth now belong
To him; I gave her, and it was no wrong
In our religion; it stay'd his death,
Threaten'd by Love; Stratonica she hath
To name: so now we may enjoy one state,
And our fast friendship shall outlast all date.
She from her height was willing to descend;
I quit my joy; he rather chose his end
Than our offence; and in his prime had died,
Had not the wise Physician been our guide;
Silence in love o'ercame his vital part;
His love was force, his silence virtuous art.
A father's tender care made me agree
To this strange change." This said, he turn'd from me,

As changing his design, with such a pace,
Ere I could take my leave, he had quit the place.
After the ghost was carried from mine eye,
Amazedly I walk'd; nor could untie
My mind from his sad story; till my friend
Admonish'd me, and said, "You must not lend
Attention thus to everything you meet;
You know the number's great, and time is fleet."
More naked prisoners this triumph had
Than Xerxes soldiers in his army led:
And stretchèd further than my sight could reach;
Of several countries, and of differing speech.
One of a thousand were not known to me,
Yet might those few make a large history.
Perseus was one; and well you know the way
How he was catchèd by Andromeda:
She was a lovely brownet, black her hair
And eyes. Narcissus, too, the foolish fair,
Who for his own love did himself destroy;
He had so much, he nothing could enjoy.
And she, who for his loss, deep sorrow's slave,
Changed to a voice, dwells in a hollow cave.
Iphis was there, who hasted his own fate,
He loved another, but himself did hate;
And many more condemn'd like woes to prove,
Whose life was made a curse by hapless love.
Some modern lovers in my mind remain,
But those to reckon here were needless pain:
The two, whose constant loves for ever last,
On whom the winds wait while they build their nest:
For halcyon days poor labouring sailors please,
And in rough winter calm the boisterous seas.
Far off the thoughtful Æsacus, in quest
Of his Hesperia, finds a rocky rest,
Then diveth in the floods, then mounts i' th' air;
And she who stole old Nisus' purple hair
His cruel daughter, I observed to fly:
Swift Atalanta ran for victory,
But three gold apples, and a lovely face,
Slack'd her quick paces, till she lost the race:
She brought Hippomanes along, and joy'd
That he, as others, had not been destroy'd,

But of the victory could singly boast.
I saw amidst the vain and fabulous host,
Fair Galatea lean'd on Acis' breast;
Rude Polyphemus' noise disturbs their rest.
Glaucus alone swims through the dangerous seas,
And missing her who should his fancy please,
Curseth the cruel's Love transform'd her shape.
Canens laments that Picus could not 'scape
The dire enchantress; he in Italy
Was once a king, now a pied bird; for she
Who made him such, changed not his clothes nor name,
His princely habit still appears the same.
Egeria, while she wept, became a well:
Scylla (a horrid rock by Circe's spell)
Hath made infamous the Sicilian strand.
Next, she who holdeth in her trembling hand
A guilty knife, her right hand writ her name.
Pygmalion next, with his live mistress came.
Sweet Aganippe, and Castalia have
A thousand more; all there sung by the brave
And deathless poets, on their fair banks placed;
Cydippe by an apple fool'd at last. ANNA HUME.

PART III.

Era sì pieno il cor di maraviglie.

My heart was fill'd with wonder and amaze,
As one struck dumb, in silence stands at gaze
Expecting counsel, when my friend drew near,
And said: "What do you look? why stay you here?
What mean you? know you not that I am one
Of these, and must attend? pray, let's be gone."
"Dear friend," said I, "consider what desire
To learn the rest hath set my heart on fire;
My own haste stops me." "I believe 't," said he,
"And I will help; 'tis not forbidden me.
This noble man, on whom the others wait
(You see) is Pompey, justly call'd The Great:
Cornelia followeth, weeping his hard fate,
And Ptolemy's unworthy causeless hate.
You see far off the Grecian general;
His base wife, with Ægisthus wrought his fall:

Behold them there, and judge if Love be blind.
But here are lovers of another kind,
And other faith they kept. Lynceus was saved
By Hypermnestra: Pyramus bereaved
Himself of life, thinking his mistress slain:
Thisbe's like end shorten'd her mourning pain.
Leander, swimming often, drown'd at last;
Hero her fair self from her window cast.
Courteous Ulysses his long stay doth mourn;
His chaste wife prayeth for his safe return;
While Circe's amorous charms her prayers control,
And rather vex than please his virtuous soul.
Hamilcar's son, who made great Rome afraid,
By a mean wench of Spain is captive led.
This Hypsicratea is, the virtuous fair,
Who for her husband's dear love cut her hair,
And served in all his wars: this is the wife
Of Brutus, Portia, constant in her life
And death: this Julia is, who seems to moan,
That Pompey lovèd best, when she was gone.
Look here and see the Patriarch much abused
Who twice seven years for his fair Rachel choosed
To serve: O powerful love increased by woe!
His father this: now see his grandsire go
With Sarah from his home. This cruel Love
O'ercame good David; so it had power to move
His righteous heart to that abhorrèd crime,
For which he sorrow'd all his following time;
Just such like error soil'd his wise son's fame,
For whose idolatry God's anger came:
Here's he who in one hour could love and hate:
Here Tamar, full of anguish, wails her state;
Her brother Absalom attempts t' appease
Her grievèd soul. Samson takes care to please
His fancy; and appears more strong than wise,
Who in a traitress' bosom sleeping lies.
Amongst those pikes and spears which guard the place,
Love, wine, and sleep, a beauteous widow's face
And pleasing art hath Holophernes ta'en;
She back again retires, who hath him slain,
With her one maid, bearing the horrid head
In haste, and thanks God that so well she sped.

The next is Sichem, he who found his death
In circumcision; his father hath
Like mischief felt; the city all did prove
The same effect of his rash violent love.
You see Ahasuerus how well he bears
His loss; a new love soon expels his cares:
This cure in this disease *doth seldom fail,*
One nail best driveth out *another nail.*
If you would see love *mingled oft with hate,*
Bitter with sweet, *behold fierce Herod's state,*
Beset with love and cruelty at *once:*
Enraged at first, then *late his fault bemoans,*
And Mariamne calls; those three *fair dames*
(Who in the list of captives write their names)
Procris, Deidamia, Artemisia were
All good, the other three as wicked are—
Semiramis, Byblis, and Myrrha named,
Who of their crooked ways are now ashamed:
Here be the erring knights in ancient scrolls,
Lancelot, Tristram, and the vulgar souls
That wait on these; Guenever, and the fair
Isond, with other lovers; and the pair
Who, as they walk together, seem to plain,
Their just, but cruel fate, by one hand slain."
Thus he discoursed: and as a man that fears
Approaching harm, when he a trumpet hears,
Starts at the blow ere touch'd, my frighted blood
Retired: as one raised from his tomb I stood;
When by my side I spied a lovely maid,
(No turtle ever purer whiteness had!)
And straight was caught (who lately swore I would
Defend me from a man at arms), nor could
Resist the wounds of words with motion graced:
The image yet is in my fancy placed.
My friend was willing to increase my woe,
And smiling whisper'd,—"You alone may go
Confer with whom you please, for now we are
All stainèd with one crime." My sullen care
Was like to theirs, who are more grieved to know
Another's happiness than their own woe;
For seeing her, who had enthrall'd my mind,
Live free in peace, and no disturbance find:

And seeing that I knew my hurt too late,
And that her beauty was my dying fate:
Love, jealousy, and envy held my sight
So fix'd on that fair face, no other light
I could behold; like one who in the rage
Of sickness greedily his thirst would 'suage
With hurtful drink, which doth his palate please,
Thus (blind and deaf t' all other joys are ease)
So many doubtful ways I follow'd her,
The memory still shakes my soul with fear.
Since when mine eyes are moist, and view the ground;
My heart is heavy, and my steps have found
A solitary dwelling 'mongst the woods,
I stray o'er rocks and fountains, hills and floods:
Since when such store my scatter'd papers hold
Of thoughts, of tears, of ink; which oft I fold,
Unfold, and tear: since when I know the scope
Of Love, and what they fear, and what they hope;
And how they live that in his cloister dwell,
The skilful in their face may read it well.
Meanwhile I see, how fierce and gallant she
Cares not for me, nor for my misery,
Proud of her virtue, and my overthrow:
And on the other side (if aught I know),
This lord, who hath the world in triumph led,
She keeps in fear; thus all my hopes are dead,
No strength nor courage left, nor can I be
Revenged, as I expected once; for he,
Who tortures me and others, is abused
By her; she'll not be caught, and long hath used
(Rebellious as she is!) to shun his wars,
And is a sun amidst the lesser stars.
Her grace, smiles, slights, her words in order set;
Her hair dispersed or in a golden net;
Her eyes inflaming with a light divine
So burn my heart, I dare no more repine.
Ah, who is able fully to express
Her pleasing ways, her merit? No excess,
No bold hyperboles I need to fear,
My humble style cannot enough come near
The truth; my words are like a little stream
Compared with th' ocean, so large a theme

Is that high praise; new worth, not seen before,
Is seen in her, and can be seen no more;
Therefore all tongues are silenced; and I,
Her prisoner now, see her at liberty:
And night and day implore (O unjust fate!)
She neither hears nor pities my estate:
Hard laws of Love! But though a partial lot
I plainly see in this, yet must I not
Refuse to serve: the gods, as well as men,
With like reward of old have felt like pain.
Now know I how the mind itself doth part
(Now making peace, now war, now truce)—what art
Poor lovers use to hide their stinging woe:
And how their blood now comes, and now doth go
Betwixt their heart and cheeks, by shame or fear:
How they be eloquent, yet speechless are;
And how they both ways lean, they watch and sleep,
Languish to death, yet life and vigour keep:
I trod the paths made happy by her feet,
And search the foe I am afraid to meet.
I know how lovers metamorphosed are
To that they love: I know what tedious care
I feel; how vain my joy, how oft I change
Design and countenance; and (which is strange)
I live without a soul: I know the way
To cheat myself a thousand times a day:
I know to follow while I flee my fire:
I freeze when present; absent, my desire
Is hot: I know what cruel rigour Love
Practiseth on the mind, and doth remove
All reason thence, and how he racks the heart:
And how a soul hath neither strength nor art
Without a helper to resist his blows:
And how he flees, and how his darts he throws:
And how his threats the fearful lover feels:
And how he robs by force, and how he steals:
How oft his wheels turn round (now high, now low)
With how uncertain hope, how certain woe:
How all his promises be void of faith,
And how a fire hid in our bones he hath:
How in our veins he makes a secret wound,
Whence open flames and death do soon abound.

In sum, I know how giddy and how vain
Be lovers' lives; what fear and boldness reign
In all their ways; how every sweet is paid,
And with a double weight of sour allay'd:
I also know their customs, sighs, and songs;
Their sudden muteness, and their stammering tongues:
How short their joy, how long their pain doth last,
How wormwood spoileth all their honey's taste.

ANNA HUME.

PART IV.

Poscia che mia fortuna in forza altrui.

WHEN once my will was captive by my fate,
And I had lost the liberty, which late
Made my life happy; I, who used before
To flee from Love (as fearful deer abhor
The following huntsman), suddenly became
(Like all my fellow-servants) calm and tame;
And view'd the travails, wrestlings, and the smart,
The crooked by-paths, and the cozening art
That guides the amorous flock: then whilst mine eye
I cast in every corner, to espy
Some ancient or modern who had proved
Famous, I saw him, who had only loved
Eurydice, and found out hell, to call
Her dear ghost back; he named her in his fall
For whom he died. Alcæus there was known,
Skilful in love and verse: Anacreon,
Whose muse sung nought but love: Pindarus, he
Was also there: there I might Virgil see:
Many brave wits I found, some looser rhymes,
By others writ, hath pleased the ancient times:
Ovid was one: after Catullus came:
Propertius next, his elegies the name
Of Cynthia bear: Tibullus, and the young
Greek poetess, who is received among
The noble troop for her rare Sapphic muse.
Thus looking here and there (as oft I use),
I spied much people on a flowery plain,
Amongst themselves disputes of love maintain.
Behold Beatrice with Dante; Selvaggia, she
Brought her Pistoian Cino; Guitton may be

Offended that he is the latter named:
Behold both Guidos for their learning famed:
Th' honest Bolognian: the Sicilians first
Wrote love in rhymes, but wrote their rhymes the worst.
Franceschin and Sennuccio (whom all know)
Were worthy and humane: after did go
A squadron of another garb and phrase,
Of whom Arnaldo Daniel hath most praise,
Great master in Love's art, his style, as new
As sweet, honours his country: next, a few
Whom Love did lightly wound: both Peters made
Two: one, the less Arnaldo: some have had
A harder war; both the Rimbaldos, th' one
Sung Beatrice, though her quality was known
Too much above his reach in Montferrat.
Alvernia's old Piero, and Girault:
Folchetto, who from Genoa was estranged
And call'd Marsilian, he wisely changed
His name, his state, his country, and did gain
In all: Jeffray made haste to catch his bane
With sails and oars: Guilliam, too, sweetly sung
That pleasing art, was cause he died so young.
Amarig, Bernard, Hugo, and Anselm [helm,
Were there, with thousands more, whose tongues were
Shield, sword, and spear, all their offensive arms,
And their defensive to prevent their harms.
From those I turn'd, comparing my own woe,
To view my country-folks; and there might know
The good Tomasso, who did once adorn
Bologna, now Messina holds his urn.
Ah, vanish'd joys! Ah, life too full of bane!
How wert thou from mine eyes so quickly ta'en!
Since without thee nothing is in my power
To do, where art thou from me at this hour?
What is our life? If aught it bring of ease,
A sick man's dream, a fable told to please.
Some few there from the common road did stray;
Lælius and Socrates, with whom I may
A longer progress take: Oh, what a pair
Of dear esteemèd friends to me they were!
'Tis not my verse, nor prose, may reach their praise;
Neither of these can naked virtue raise

Above her own true place: with them I have
Reach'd many heights; one yoke of learning gave
Laws to our steps, to them my fester'd wound
I oft have show'd; no time or place I found
To part from them; and hope, and wish we may
Be undivided till my breath decay:
With them I used (too early) to adorn
My head with th' honour'd branches, only worn
For her dear sake I did so deeply love,
Who fill'd my thoughts; but ah! I daily prove,
No fruit nor leaves from thence can gather'd be:
The root hath sharp and bitter been to me.
For this I was accustomed much to vex,
But I have seen that which my anger checks:
(A theme for buskins, not a comic stage)
She took the God, adorèd by the rage
Of such dull fools as he had captive led:
But first, I'll tell you what of us he made;
Then, from her hand what was his own sad fate,
Which Orpheus or Homer might relate.
His wingèd coursers o'er the ditches leapt,
And we their way as desperately kept,
Till he had reachèd where his mother reigns,
Nor would he ever pull or turn the reins;
But scour'd o'er woods and mountains; none did care
Nor could discern in what strange world they were.
Beyond the place, where old Ægeus mourns,
An island lies, Phœbus none sweeter burns,
Nor Neptune ever bathed a better shore:
About the midst a beauteous hill, with store
Of shades and pleasing smells, so fresh a spring
As drowns all manly thoughts: this place doth bring
Venus much joy; 't was given her deity,
Ere blind man knew a truer god than she:
Of which original it yet retains
Too much, so little goodness there remains,
That it the vicious doth only please,
Is by the virtuous shunn'd as a disease.
Here this fine Lord insulteth o'er us all
Tied in a chain, from Thule to Ganges' fall.
Griefs in our breasts, vanity in our arms;
Fleeting delights are there, and weighty harms:

Repentance swiftly following to annoy:
(Such Tarquin found it, and the bane of Troy)
All that whole valley with the echoes rung
Of running brooks, and birds that gently sung:
The banks were clothed in yellow, purple, green,
Scarlet and white, their pleasing springs were seen;
And gliding streams amongst the tender grass,
Thickets and soft winds to refresh the place.
After when winter maketh sharp the air,
Warm leaves, and leisure, sports, and gallant cheer
Enthrall low minds. Now th' equinox hath made
The day t' equal the night; and Progne had
With her sweet sister, each their old task ta'en:
(Ah! how the faith in fortune placed is vain!)
Just in the time, and place, and in the hour
When humble tears should earthly joys devour,
It pleased him, whom th' vulgar honour so,
To triumph over me; and now I know
What miserable servitude they prove,
What ruin, and what death, that fall in love.
Errors, dreams, paleness waiteth on his chair,
False fancies o'er the door, and on the stair
Are slippery hopes, unprofitable gain,
And gainful loss; such steps it doth contain,
As who descend, may boast their fortune best;
Who most ascend, most fall: a wearied rest,
And resting trouble, glorious disgrace;
A duskish and obscure illustriousness;
Unfaithful loyalty, and cozening faith,
That nimble fury, lazy reason hath:
A prison, whose wide ways do all receive,
Whose narrow paths a hard retiring leave:
A steep descent, by which we slide with ease,
But find no hold our crawling steps to raise:
Within confusion, turbulence, annoy
Are mix'd; undoubted woe, and doubtful joy:
Vulcano, where the sooty Cyclops dwell;
Liparis, Stromboli, nor Mongibel,
Nor Ischia, have more horrid noise and smoke:
He hates himself that stoops to such a yoke.
Thus were we all throng'd in so strait a cage,
I changed my looks and hair, before my age,

Dreaming on liberty (by strong desire
My soul made apt to hope), and did admire
Those gallant minds, enslaved to such a woe
(My heart within my breast dissolved like snow
Before the sun), as one would side-ways cast
His eye on pictures, which his feet hath pass'd.

ANNA HUME.

THE SAME.

PART I.

THE fatal morning dawn'd that brought again
The sad memorial of my ancient pain;
That day, the source of long-protracted woe,
When I began the plagues of Love to know,
Hyperion's throne, along the azure field,
Between the splendid horns of Taurus wheel'd;
And from her spouse the Queen of Morn withdrew
Her sandals, gemm'd with frost-bespangled dew.
Sad recollection, rising with the morn,
Of my disastrous love, repaid with scorn,
Oppress'd my sense; till welcome soft repose
Gave a short respite from my swelling woes.
Then seem'd I in a vision borne away,
Where a deep winding vale sequester'd lay;
Nor long I rested on the flowery green
Ere a soft radiance dawn'd along the scene.—
Fallacious sign of hope! for, close behind,
Dark shades of coming woe were seen combined.
There, on his car, a conqu'ring chief I spied,
Like Rome's proud sons, that led the living tide
Of vanquish'd foes, in long triumphal state,
To Capitolian Jove's disclosing gate.
With little joy I saw the splendid show,
Spent and dejected by my lengthen'd woe;
Sick of the world, and all its worthless train,
That world, where all the hateful passions reign;
And yet intent the mystic cause to find,
(For knowledge is the banquet of the mind)
Languid and slow I turn'd my cheerless eyes
On the proud warrior, and his uncouth guise.
High on his seat an archer youth was seen,
With loaded quiver, and malicious mien

Nor plate, nor mail, his cruel shaft can ward,
Nor polish'd burganet the temples guard;
His burning chariot seem'd by coursers drawn;
While, like the snows that clothe the wintry lawn,
His waving wings with rainbow colour gay
On either naked shoulder seem'd to play;
And, filing far behind, a countless train
In sad procession hid the groaning plain:
Some, captive, seem'd in long disastrous strife,
Some, in the deadly fray, bereft of life;
And freshly wounded some. A viewless hand
Led me to mingle with the mornful band,
And learn the fortunes of the sentenced crew,
Who, pierced by Love, had bid the world adieu.
With keen survey I mark'd the ghostly show,
To find a shade among the sons of woe
To memory known: but every trace was lost
In the dim features of the moving host:
Oblivion's hand had drawn a dark disguise
O'er their wan lineaments and beamless eyes.
At length, a pallid face I seem'd to know;
Which wore, methought, a lighter mask of woe;
He call'd me by my name.—"Behold!" he cried,
"What plagues the hapless thralls of Love abide!"—
"How am I known by thee?" with new surprise
I cried; "no mark recalls thee to my eyes."—
"Oh, heavy is my load!" he seem'd to say;
"Through this dark medium no detecting ray
Assists thy sight; but I, like thee, can boast
My birth on famed Etruria's ancient coast."—
The secret which his murky mask conceal'd,
His well-known voice and Tuscan tongue reveal'd;
Thence to a lighter station we repair'd,
And thus the phantom spoke, with mild regard:—
"We thought to see thy name with ours enroll'd
Long since; for oft thy looks this fate foretold."—
"True," I replied; "but I survived the strife:
His arrows reach'd me, but were short of life."—
Pausing, he spoke:—"A spark to flame will rise,
And bear thy name in glory to the skies."—
His meaning was obscure, but in my breast
I felt the substance of his words impress'd,

As sculptured stone, or monumental brass,
Keeps the firm record, or heroic face.
With youthful ardour new, and hope inspired,
Quick from my grave companion I required
The name and fortunes of the passing train,
And why in mournful pomp they trod the plain—
"Time," he return'd, "the secret then will show,
When thou shalt join the retinue of woe:
But years shall sprinkle o'er thy locks with gray,
And alter'd looks the signs of age betray,
Ere at his powerful touch the fetters fall,
Which many a moon thy captive limbs shall gall:
Yet will I grant thy suit, and give to view
The various fortunes of the captive crew:
But mark their leader first, that chief renown'd—
The Power of Love! by every nation own'd.
His sway thou soon, as well as we, shalt know,
Stung to the heart by goads of dulcet woe.
In him unthinking youth's misgovern'd rage,
Join'd with the cool malignity of age,
Is known to mingle with insidious guile,
Deep, deep conceal'd beneath an infant's smile.
The child of slothful ease, and sensual heat—
By sweet delirious thoughts, in dark retreat,
Mature in mischief grown—he springs away,
A wingèd god, and thousands own his sway.
Some, as thou seest, are number'd with the dead,
And some the bitter drops of sorrow shed
Through lingering life, by viewless tangles bound,
That link the soul, and chain it to the ground.
There Cæsar walks! of Celtic laurels proud,
Nor feels himself in sensual bondage bow'd:
He treads the flowery path, nor sees the snare
Laid for his honour by the Egyptian fair.
Here Love his triumph shows, and leads along
The world's great owner in the captive throng;
And o'er the master of unsceptered kings
Exulting soars, and claps his purple wings.
See his adopted son! he knew her guile,
And nobly scorn'd the siren of the Nile;
Yet fell by Roman charms—and from her spouse
The pregnant consort bore, regardless of her vows.

There, cruel Nero feels his iron heart
Lanced by imperious Love's resistless dart;
Replete with rage, and scorning human ties,
He falls the victim of two conquering eyes;
Deep ambush'd there in philosophic spoils,
The little tyrant tries his artful wiles:
E'en in that hallow'd breast, where, deep enshrined,
Lay all the varied treasures of the mind,
He lodged his venom'd shaft. The hoary sage,
Like meaner mortals, felt the passion rage.
In boundless fury for a strumpet's charms,
And clasp'd the shining mischief in his arms.—
See Dionysius link'd with Pheræ's lord,
Pale doubt and dread on either front abhorr'd.
Scowl terrible! yet Love assign'd their doom;
A wife and mistress mark'd them for the tomb!—
The next is he that on Antandros' coast
His fair Crëusa mourn'd, for ever lost;
Yet cut the bonds of Love on Tyber's shore,
And bought a bride with young Evander's gore.
Here droop'd the victim of a lawless flame:
The amorous frenzy of the Cretan dame
He fled abhorrent, and contemn'd her tears,
And to the dire suggestion closed his ears.
But nought, alas! his purity avail'd—
Fate in his flight the hapless youth assail'd,
By interdicted Love to Vengeance fired;
And by his father's curse the son expired.
The stepdame shared his fate, and dearly paid
A spouse, a sister, and a son betray'd:
Her conscience, by the false impeachment stung,
Upon herself return'd the deadly wrong;
And he, that broke before his plighted vows,
Met his deserts in an adulterous spouse.
See! where he droops between the sister dames,
And fondly melts—the other scorns his flames.—
The mighty slave of Omphale behind
Is seen, and he whom Love and fraud combined
Sent to the shades of everlasting night;
And still he seems to weep his wretched plight.—
There, Phyllis mourns Demophoon's broken vows,
And fell Medea there pursues her spouse;

With impious boast, and shrill upbraiding cries,
She tells him how she broke the holy ties
Of kindred for his sake; the guilty shore
That from her poignard drank a brother's gore;
The deep affliction of her royal sire,
Who heard her flight with imprecations dire.—
See! beauteous Helen, with her Trojan swain—
The royal youth that fed his amorous pain,
With ardent gaze, on those destructive charms
That waken'd half the warring world to arms.—
Yonder, behold Oenone's wild despair,
Who mourns the triumphs of the Spartan fair!
The injured husband answers groan for groan,
And young Hermione with piteous moan
Orestes calls; while Laodamia near
Bewails her valiant consort's fate severe.—
Adrastus' daughter there laments her spouse
Sincere and constant to her nuptial vows;
Yet, lured by her, with gold's seductive aid,
Her lord, Eriphile, to death betray'd."

And now, the baleful anthem, loud and long,
Rose in full chorus from the passing throng;
And Love's sad name, the cause of all their woes,
In execrations seem'd the dirge to close.—
But who the number and the names can tell
Of those that seem'd the deadly strain to swell!—
Not men alone, but gods my dream display'd—
Celestial wailings fill'd the myrtle shade:
Soft Venus, with her lover, mourn'd the snare,
The King of Shades, and Proserpine the fair;
Juno, whose frown disclosed her jealous spite;
Nor, less enthrall'd by Love, the god of light,
Who held in scorn the wingèd warrior's dart
Till in his breast he felt the fatal smart.—
Each god, whose name the learnèd Roman told,
In Cupid's numerous levy seem'd enroll'd;
And, bound before his car in fetters strong,
In sullen state the Thunderer march'd along. BOYD.

PART II.

THUS, as I view'd th' interminable host,
The prospect seem'd at last in dimness lost:
But still the wish remain'd their doom to know,
As, watchful, I survey'd the passing show.
As each majestic form emerged to light,
Thither, intent, I turn'd my sharpen'd sight;
And soon a noble pair my notice drew,
That, hand in hand approaching, met my view.
In gentle parley, and communion sweet—
With looks of love, they seem'd mine eyes to meet;
Yet strange was their attire—their tongue unknown
Spoke them the natives of a distant zone;
But every doubt my kind assistant clear'd,
Instant I knew them, when their names were heard.
To one, encouraged by his apect mild,
I spoke—the other with a frown recoil'd.—
"O Masinissa!"—thus my speech began,
"By Scipio's friendship, and the gentle ban
Of constant love, attend my warm request."
Turning around, the solemn shade address'd
His answer thus:—"With like desire I glow
Your lineage, name, and character, to know,
Since you have learnt my name." With soft reply
I said, "A name like mine can nought supply
The notice of renown like yours to claim.
No smother'd spark like mine emits a flame
To catch the public eye, as you can boast—
A leading name in Cupid's numerous host!
Alike his future victims and the past
Shall own the common tie, while time itself shall last.
But tell me (if your guide allow a space
The semblance of those tendant shades to trace)
The names and fortunes of the following pair
Who seem the noblest gifts of mind to share."—
"My name," he said, "you seem to know so well
That faithful Memory all the rest can tell;
But as the sad detail may soothe my woes,
Listen, while I my mournful doom disclose:—
To Rome and Scipio's cause my faith was bound,
E'en Lælius scarce a warmer friendship own'd:

Where'er their ensigns fann'd the summer sky,
I led my Libyans on, a firm ally;
Propitious Fortune still advanced his name,
Yet more than she bestow'd, his worth might claim.
Still we advanced, and still our glory grew
While westward far the Roman eagle flew
With conquest wing'd; but my unlucky star
Led me, unconscious, to the fatal snare
Which Love had laid. I saw the regal dame—
Our hearts at once confess'd a mutual flame.
Caught by the lure of interdicted joys,
Proudly I scorn'd the stern forbidding voice
Of Roman policy; and hoped the vows
At Hymen's altar sworn, might save my spouse.
But, oh! that wondrous man, who ne'er would yield
To passion's call, the cruel sentence seal'd,
That tore my consort from my fond embrace,
And left me sunk in anguish and disgrace.
Unmoved he saw my briny sorrows flow,
Unmoved he listen'd to my tale of woe!
But friendship, waked at last, with reverent awe,
Obsequious, own'd his mind's superior law;
And to that holy and unclouded light,
That led him on through passion's dubious night,
Submiss I bow'd; for, oh! the beam of day
Is dark to him that wants her guiding ray!—
Love, hardly conquer'd, long repined in vain,
When Justice link'd the adamantine chain;
And cruel Friendship o'er the conquer'd ground
Raised with strong hand th' insuperable mound.
To him I owed my laurels nobly won—
I loved him as a brother, sire, and son,
For in an equal race our lives had run;
Yet the sad price I paid with burning tears;—
Dire was the cause that woke my gloomy fears!
Too well the sad result my soul divined,
Too well I knew the unsubmitting mind
Of Sophonisba would prefer the tomb
To stern captivity's ignoble doom.
I, too, sad victim of celestial wrath,
Was forced to aid the tardy stroke of death:
With pangs I yielded to her piercing cries,
To speed her passage to the nether skies;

And worse than death endured, her mind to save
From shame, more hateful than the yawning grave.—
What was my anguish, when she seized the bowl,
She knows! and you, whose sympathising soul
Has felt the fiery shaft, may guess my pains—
Now tears and anguish are her sole remains.
That treasure, to preserve my faith to Rome,
Those hands committed to th' untimely tomb;
And every hope and joy of life resign'd
To keep the stain of falsehood from my mind.
But hasten, and the moving pomp survey,
(The light-wing'd moments brook no long delay),
To try if any form your notice claims
Among those love-lorn youths and amorous dames."—
With poignant grief I heard his tale of woe,
That seem'd to melt my heart like vernal snow,
When a low voice these sullen accents sung:—
"Not for himself, but those from whom he sprung,
He merits fate; for I detest them all
To whose fell rage I owe my country's fall."
"Oh, calm your rage, unhappy Queen!" I cried;
"Twice was the land and sea in slaughter dyed
By cruel Carthage, till the sentence pass'd
That laid her glories in the dust at last."—
"Yet mournful wreaths no less the victors crown'd;
In deep despair our valour oft they own'd.
Your own impartial annals yet proclaim
The Punic glory and the Roman shame."
She spoke—and with a smile of hostile spite
Join'd the deep train, and darken'd to my sight.
Then, as a traveller through lands unknown
With care and keen observance journeys on;
Whose dubious thoughts his eager steps retard,
Thus through the files I pass'd with fix'd regard;
Still singling some amid the moving show,
Intent the story of their loves to know.
A spectre now within my notice came,
Though dubious marks of joy, commix'd with shame,
His features wore, like one who gains a boon
With secret glee, which shame forbids to own.
O dire example of the Demon's power!
The father leaves the hymeneal bower

For his incestuous son; the guilty spouse
With transport mix'd with honour, meets his vows!
In mournful converse now, amidst the host,
Their compact they bewail'd, and Syria lost!
Instant, with eager step, I turn'd aside,
And met the double husband, and the bride,
And with an earnest voice the first address'd:—
A look of dread the spectre's face express'd,
When first the accents of victorious Rome
Brought to his mind his kingdom's ancient doom.
At length, with many a doleful sigh, he said,
"You here behold Seleucus' royal shade.
Antiochus is next; his life to save,
My ready hand my beauteous consort gave,
(From me, whose will was law, a legal prize,)
That bound our souls in everlasting ties
Indissolubly strong. The royal fair
Forsook a throne to cure the deep despair
Of him, who would have dared the stroke of Death,
To keep, without a stain, his filial faith.
A skilful leech the deadly symptoms guess'd;
His throbbing veins the secret soon confess'd
Of Love with honour match'd, in dire debate,
Whenever he beheld my lovely mate;
Else gentle Love, subdued by filial dread,
Had sent him down among th' untimely dead."—
Then, like a man that feels a sudden thought
His purpose change, the mingling crowd he sought,
And left the question, which a moment hung
Scarce half suppress'd upon my faltering tongue.
Suspended for a moment, still I stood,
With various thoughts oppress'd in musing mood.
At length a voice was heard, "The passing day
Is yours, but it permits not long delay."—
I turn'd in haste, and saw a fleeting train
Outnumbering those who pass'd the surging main
By Xerxes led—a naked wailing crew,
Whose wretched plight the drops of sorrow drew
From my full eyes.—Of many a clime and tongue
Commix'd the mournful pageant moved along.
While scarce the fortunes or the name of one
Among a thousand passing forms was known,

I spied that Ethiopian's dusky charms,
Which woke in Perseus' bosom Love's alarms;
And next was he who for a shadow burn'd,
Which the deceitful watery glass return'd;
Enamour'd of himself, in sad decay—
Amid abundance, poor—he look'd his life away;
And now transform'd through passion's baneful power,
He o'er the margin hangs, a drooping flower;
While, by her hopeless love congeal'd to stone,
His mistress seems to look in silence on;
Then he that loved, by too severe a fate,
The cruel maid who met his love with hate,
Pass'd by; with many more who met their doom
By female pride, and fill'd an early tomb.—
There too, the victim of her plighted vows,
Halcyone for ever mourns her spouse;
Who now, in feathers clad, as poets feign,
Makes a short summer on the wintry main.—
Then he that to the cliffs the maid pursued,
And seem'd by turns to soar, and swim the flood;—
And she, who, snared by Love, her father sold,
With her, who fondly shared the rolling gold;
And her young paramour, who made his boast
That he had gain'd the prize his rival lost.—
Acis and Galatea next were seen,
And Polyphemus with infuriate mien;—
And Glaucus there, by rival arts assail'd,
Fell Circe's hate and Scylla's doom bewail'd.—
Then sad Carmenta, with her royal lord,
Whom the fell sorceress clad, by arts abhorr'd,
With plumes; but still the regal stamp impress'd
On his imperial wings and lofty crest.—
Then she, whose tears the springing fount supplied;—
And she whose form above the rolling tide
Hangs a portentous cliff—the royal fair,
Who wrote the dictates of her last despair
To him whose ships had left the friendly strand,
With the keen steel in her determined hand.—
There, too, Pygmalion, with his new-made spouse,
With many more, I spied, whose amorous vows
And fates in never-dying song resound
Where Aganippe laves the sacred ground:—

And, last of all, I saw the lovely maid
Of Love unconscious, by an oath betray'd. BOYD.

PART III.

LIKE one by wonder reft of speech, I stood
Pond'ring the mournful scene in pensive mood;
As one that waits advice. My guide in haste
Began:—"You let the moments run to waste:
What objects hold you here?—my doom you know;
Compell'd to wander with the sons of woe!"—
"Oh, yet awhile afford your friendly aid!
You see my inmost soul;" submiss I said:
"The strong unsated wish you there can read;
The restless cravings of my mind to feed
With tidings of the dead."—In gentler tone
He said, "Your longings in your looks are known;
You wish to learn the names of those behind
Who through the vale in long procession wind:
I grant your prayer, if fate allows a space,"
He said; "their fortunes, as they come, to trace.—
See that majestic shade that moves along,
And claims obeisance from the ghostly throng:
'Tis Pompey; with the partner of his vows,
Who mourns the fortunes of her slaughter'd spouse,
By Egypt's servile band.—The next is he
Whom Love's tyrannic spell forbade to see
The danger by his cruel consort plann'd,
Till Fate surprised him by her treacherous hand.—
Let constancy and truth exalt the name
Of her, the lovely candidate for fame,
Who saved her spouse!—Then Pyramus is seen,
And Thisbe, through the shade, with pensive mien;—
Then Hero with Leander moves along,—
And great Ulysses, towering in the throng:
His visage wears the signs of anxious thought.
There sad Penelope laments her lot:
With trickling tears she seems to chide his stay,
While fond Calypso charms her love-delay.—
Next he who braved in many a bloody fight,
For years on years, the whole collected might
Of Rome, but sunk at length in Cupid's snare

The shameful victim of th' Apulian fair!—
Then she, that, in a servile dress pursued,
(Reft of her golden locks) o'er field and flood,
With peerless faith, her exiled spouse unknown,
With whom of old she fill'd a lofty throne.—
Then Portia comes, who fire and steel defied;
And Julia, grieved to see a second bride
Engage her consort's love.—The Hebrew swain
Appears, who sold himself his love to gain
For seven long summers—a vivacious flame,
Which neither years nor constant toil could tame!—
Then Isaac, with his father, joins the band,
Who, with his consort, left at God's command,
Led by the lamp of faith, his native land.—
David is next, by lawless passion sway'd;
And, adding crime to crime, at last betray'd
To deeds of blood, till solitude and tears
Wash'd his dire guilt away, and calm'd his fears.
The sensual vapour, with Circean fume,
Involved his royal son in deeper gloom,
And dimm'd his glory, till, immersed in vice;
His heart renounced the Ruler of the Skies,
Adopting Stygian gods.—The changeful hue
Of his incestuous brother meets your view,
Who lurks behind: observe the sudden turn
Of love and hatred blanch his cheek, and burn!
His ruin'd sister there, with frantic speed,
To Absalom recounts the direful deed.—
Samson behold, a prey to female fraud!
Strong, but unwise, he laid the pledge of God
In her fallacious lap, who basely sold
Her husband's honour for Philistian gold.—
Judith is nigh, who, mid a host in arms,
With gentle accents and alluring charms
Their chief o'ercame, and, at the noon of night,
From his pavilion sped her venturous flight
With one attendant slave, who bore along
The tyrant's head amid the hostile throng;
Adoring Him who arms the feeble hand,
And bids the weak a mighty foe withstand.—
Unhappy Sichem next is seen, who paid
A bloody ransom for an injured maid:

His guiltless sire and all his slaughter'd race,
With many a life, attend the foul disgrace.
Such was the ruin by a sudden gust
Of passion caused, when murder follow'd lust!—
That other, like a wise physician, cured
An abject passion, long with pain endured:
To Vashti for an easy boon he sued;
She scorn'd his suit, and rage his love subdued:
Soon to its aid a softer passion came,
And from his breast expell'd the former flame:
Like wedge by wedge displaced, the nuptial ties
He breaks, and soon another bride supplies.—
But if you wish to see the bosom (war
Of Jealousy and Love) in deadly jar,
Behold that royal Jew! the dire control
Of Love and Hate by turns besiege his soul.
Now Vengeance wins the day—the deed is done!
And now, in fell remorse, he hates the sun,
And calls his consort from the realms of night,
To which his fatal hand had sped her flight.—
Behold yon hapless three, by passion lost,
Procris, and Artemisia's royal ghost;
And her, whose son (his mother's grief and joy)
Razed with paternal rage the walls of Troy,—
Another triple sisterhood is seen;
This characters of Hades. Mark their mien
With sin distain'd: their downcast looks disclose
A conscience of their crimes, and dread of coming woes.—
Semiramis, and Byblis (famed of old)
Her mother's rival there you next behold;
With many a warrior, many a lovely dame
Of old, ennobled by romantic fame.—
There Lancelot and Tristram (famed in fight)
Are seen, with many a dame and errant knight;—
Genevra, Belle Isonde, and hundreds more;
With those who mingled their incestuous gore
Shed by paternal rage; and chant beneath,
In baneful symphony, the Song of Death."
He scarce had spoken, when a chill presage
(What warriors feel before the battle's rage,
When in the angry trump's sonorous breath
They hear, before it comes, the sound of Death)

My heart possess'd; and, tinged with deadly pale,
I seem'd escaped from Death's eternal jail;
When, fleeting to my side with looks of Love,
A phantom brighter than the Cyprian dove
My fingers clasp'd; which, though of power to wield
The temper'd sabre in the bloody field
Against an armèd foe, a touch subdued;
And gentle words, and looks that fired the blood,
My friend address'd me (I remember well),
And from his lips these dubious accents fell:—
"Converse with whom you please, for all the train
Are mark'd alike the slaves of Cupid's reign."—
Thus, in security and peace trepann'd,
I was enlisted in that wayward band,
Who short-lived joys by anguish long obtain,
And whom the pleasures of a rival pain
More than their proper joys. Remembrance shows
Too clear at last the source of all my woes,
When Jealousy, and Love, and Envy drew
That nurture from my heart by which they grew.
As feverish eyes on air-drawn features dwell,
My fascinated eyes, by magic spell,
Dwell'd on the heavenly form with ardent look,
And at a glance the dire contagion took
That tinged my days to come; and each delight,
But those that bore her stamp, consign'd to night.
I blush with shame when to my inward view
The devious paths return where Cupid drew
His willing slave, with all my hopes and fears—
When Phœbus seem'd to rise and set in tears
For many a spring—and when I used to dwell
A lonely hermit in a silent cell.
How upwards oft I traced the purling rills
To their pure fountains in the misty hills!
The rocks I used to climb, the solemn woods,
Where oft I wander'd by the winding floods!
And often spent, whene'er I chanced to stray,
In amorous ditties all the livelong day!
What mournful rhymes I wrote and 'rased again,
Spending the precious hours of youth in vain!
'Twas in this school I learn'd the mystic things
Of the blind god, and all the secret springs

From which his hopes and fears alternate rise:
'Graved on his frontlet, the detection lies,
Which all may read, for I have oped their eyes.
And she, the cause of all my lengthen'd toils,
Disdains my passion, though she boasts my spoils.
Of rigid honour proud, she smiles to see
The fatal triumph of her charms in me.
Not Love himself can aid, for Love retires,
And in her sacred presence veils his fires:
He feels his genius by her looks subdued,
And all his spells by stronger spells withstood.
Hence my despair; for neither force nor art
Can wound her bosom, nor extract the dart
That rankles here, while proudly she defies
The power that makes a captive world his prize.
She is not one that dallies with the foe,
But with unconquer'd soul defies the blow;
And, like the Lord of Light, displays afar
A splendour which obscures each lesser star.
Her port is all divine; her radiant smile,
And e'en her scorn, the captive heart beguile;
Her accents breathe of heaven; her auburn hair
(Whether it wanton with the sportive air,
Or bound in shining wreaths adorns her face,)
Secures her conquests with resistless grace;
Her eyes, that sparkle with celestial fire,
Have render'd me the slave of fond desire.
But who can raise his style to match her charms?
What mortal bard can sing the soft alarms
That flutter in the breast, and fire the veins?
Alas! the theme surmounts the loftiest strains.
Far as the ocean in its ample bed
Exceeds the purling stream that warbles through the mead,
Such charms are hers—as never were reveal'd
On earth, since Phœbus first the world beheld!
And voices, tuned her peerless form to praise,
Suffer a solemn pause with mute amaze.
Thus was I manacled for life; while she,
Proud of my bonds, enjoy'd her liberty.
With ceaseless suit I pray'd, but all in vain;
One prayer among a thousand scarce could gain

A slight regard—so hopeless was my state,
And such the laws of Love imposed by fate!
For stedfast is the rule by Nature given,
Which all the ranks of life, from earth to heaven,
With reverent awe and homage due obey,
And every age and climate owns its sway.
I know the cruel pangs by lovers borne,
When from the breast the bleeding heart is torn
By Love's relentless gripe; the deadly harms
Of Cupid, when he wields resistless arms;
Or when, in dubious truce, he drops his dart,
And gives short respite to the tortured heart.
The vital current's ebb and flood I know,
When shame or anger bids the features glow,
Or terror pales the cheek; the deadly snake
I know that nestles in the flowery brake,
And, watchful, seems to sleep, and languor feigns,
When health-inspiring vigour fills the veins.
I know what hope and fear assail the mind
When I pursue my love, yet dread to find.
I know the strange and sympathetic tie,
When, soul in soul transfused, a fond ally
For ever seems another and the same,
Or change with mutual love their mortal frame.
From transient smiles to long protracted woe
The various turns and dark degrees I know;
And hot and cold, and that unequall'd smart
When souls survive, though sever'd from the heart.
I know, I cherish, and detect the cheat
Of every hour; but still, with eager feet
And fervent hope, pursue the flying fair,
And still for promised rapture meet despair.
When absent, I consume in raging fire;
But, in her presence check'd, the flames expire,
Repress'd by sacred awe. The boundless sway
Of cruel Love I feel, that makes a prey
Of all those energies that lift the soul
To her congenial climes above the pole.
I know the various pangs that rend the heart;
I know that noblest souls receive the dart
Without defence, when Reason drops the shield
And, recreant, to her foe resigns the field.—

I saw the archer in his airy flight,
I saw him when he check'd his arrow's flight:
And when it reach'd the mark, I watched the god,
And saw him win his way by force or fraud,
As best befits his ends. His whirling throne
Turns short at will, or runs directly on.
The rapid fellies which his axle bear,
Are short fallacious hope and certain fear;
And many a promise given of Halcyon days,
Whose faint and dubious gleam the heart betrays.
I know what secret flame the marrow fries,
How in the veins a dormant fever lies;
Till, fann'd to fury by contagious breath,
It gains tremendous head, and ends in death.
I know too well what long and doubtful strife
Forms the dire tissue of a lover's life;
The transient taste of sweet commix'd with gall,
What changes dire the hapless crew befall.
Their strange fantastic habitudes I know,
Their measured groans in lamentable flow;
When rhyming-fits the faltering tongue employ,
And love-sick spasms the mournful Muse annoy;
The smile that like the lightning fleets away,
The sorrows that for half a life delay;
Like drops of honey in a wormwood bowl,
Drain'd to the dregs in bitterness of soul. BOYD.

PART IV.

So fickle fortune, in a luckless hour,
Had close consign'd me to a tyrant's power,
Who cut the nerves that, with elastic force,
Had borne me on in Freedom's generous course—
So I, in noble independence bred,
Free as the roebuck in the sylvan glade,
By passion lured, a voluntary slave—
My ready name to Cupid's muster gave.
And yet I saw their grief and wild despair;
I saw them blindly seek the fatal snare
Through winding paths, and many an artful maze,
Where Cupid's viewless spell the band obeys.
Here, as I turn'd my anxious eyes around,
If any shade I then could see renown'd

In old or modern times; the bard I spied
Whose unabated love pursued his bride
Down to the coast of Hades; and above
His life resign'd, the pledge of constant love,
Calling her name in death.—Alcæus near,
Who sung the joys of Love and toils severe,
Was seen with Pindar and the Teian swain,
A veteran gay among the youthful train
Of Cupid's host.—The Mantuan next I found,
Begirt with bards from age to age renown'd;
Whether they chose in lofty themes to soar,
Or sportive try the Muse's lighter lore.—
There soft Tibullus walk'd with Sulmo's bard;
And there Propertius with Catullus shared
The meed of lovesome lays: the Grecian dame
With sweeter numbers woke the amorous flame.—
While thus I turn'd around my wondering eyes,
I saw a noble train with new surprise,
Who seem'd of Love in choral notes to sing,
While all around them breathed Elysian spring.—
Here Alighieri, with his love I spied,
Selvaggia, Guido, Cino, side by side—
Guido, who mourn'd the lot that fix'd his name
The second of his age in lyric fame.—
Two other minstrels there I spied that bore
His name, renown'd on Arno's tuneful shore.
With them Sicilia's bards, in elder days
Match'd with the foremost in poetic praise,
Though now they rank behind.—Sennuccio nigh
With gentle Franceschino met my eye.—
But soon another tribe, of manners strange
And uncouth dialect, was seen to range
Along the flowery paths, by Arnald led;
In Cupid's lore by all the Muses bred,
And master of the theme.—Marsilia's coast
And Narbonne still his polish'd numbers boast.—
The next I saw with lighter step advance;
'Twas he that caught a flame at every glance
That met his eye, with him who shared his name,
Join'd with an Arnald of inferior fame.—
Next either Rambold in procession trod,
No easy conquest to the winged god.

The pride of Montferrat (a peerless dame)
In many a ditty sung, announced his flame;
And Genoa's bard, who left his native coast,
And on Marsilia's towers the memory lost
Of his first time, when Salem's sacred flame
Taught him a nobler heritage to claim,—
Gerard and Peter, both of Gallic blood,
And tuneful Rudel, who, in moonstruck mood,
O'er ocean by a flying image led,
In the fantastic chase his canvas spread;
And, where he thought his amorous vows to breathe,
From Cupid's bow received the shaft of Death.—
There was Cabestaing, whose unequall'd lays
From all his rivals won superior praise.—
Hugo was there, with Almeric renown'd;—
Bernard and Anselm by the Muses crown'd.—
Those and a thousand others o'er the field
Advanced; nor javelin did they want, or shield;
The Muses form'd their guard, and march'd before,
Spreading their long renown from shore to shore.—
The Latian band, with sympathising woe,
At last I spied amid the moving show:
Bologna's poet first, whose honour'd grave
His relics hold beside Messina's wave.
O fickle joys, that fleet upon the wind,
And leave the lassitude of life behind!
The youth, that every thought and movement sway'd
Of this sad heart, is now an empty shade!
What world contains thee now, my tuneful guide,
Whom nought of old could sever from my side?
What is this life?—what none but fools esteem;
A fleeting shadow, a romantic dream!—
Not far I wander'd o'er the peopled field,
Till Socrates and Lælius I beheld.
Oh, may their holy influence never cease
That soothed my heart-corroding pangs to peace!
Unequall'd friends! no bard's ecstatic lays
Nor polish'd prose your deathless name can raise
To match your genuine worth! O'er hill and dale
We pass'd, and oft I told my doleful tale,
Disclosing all my wounds, and not in vain:
Their sacred presence seem'd to soothe my pain

Oh, may that glorious privilege be mine,
Till dust to dust the final stroke resign!
My courage they inspired to claim the wreath—
Immortal emblem of my constant faith
To her whose name the poet's garland bears!
Yet nought from her, for long devoted years,
I reap'd but cold disdain, and fruitless tears.—
But soon a sight ensued, that, like a spell,
Restrain'd at once my passion's stormy swell:
But this a loftier muse demands to sing,
The hallow'd power that pruned the daring wing
Of that blind force, by folly canonized
And in the garb of deity disguised.
Yet first the conscious muse designs to tell
How I endured and 'scaped his witching spell;
A subject that demands a muse of fire,
A glorious theme, that Phœbus might inspire—
Worthy of Homer and the Orphean lyre!
Still, as along the whirling chariot flew,
I kept the wafture of his wings in view:
Onward his snow-white steeds were seen to bound
O'er many a steepy hill and dale profound:
And, victims of his rage, the captive throng,
Chain'd to the flying wheels, were dragg'd along,
All torn and bleeding, through the thorny waste;
Nor knew I how the land and sea he pass'd,
Till to his mother's realm he came at last.
Far eastward, where the vext Ægean roars,
A little isle projects its verdant shores:
Soft is the clime, and fruitful is the ground,
No fairer spot old ocean clips around;
Nor Sol himself surveys from east to west
A sweeter scene in summer livery drest.
Full in the midst ascends a shady hill,
Where down its bowery slopes a streaming rill
In dulcet murmurs flows, and soft perfume
The senses court from many a vernal bloom,
Mingled with magic; which the senses steep
In sloth, and drug the mind in Lethe's deep,
Quenching the spark divine—the genuine boast
Of man, in Circe's wave immersed and lost.

'This favour'd region of the Cyprian queen
Received its freight—a heaven-abandon'd scene,
Where Falsehood fills the throne, while Truth retires,
And vainly mourns her half-extinguish'd fires.
Vile in its origin, and viler still
By all incentives that seduce the will,
It seems Elysium to the sons of Lust,
But a foul dungeon to the good and just.
Exulting o'er his slaves, the wingèd God
Here in a theatre his triumphs show'd,
Ample to hold within its mighty round
His captive train, from Thule's northern bound
To far Taprobane, a countless crowd,
Who, to the archer boy, adoring, bow'd.
Sad fantoms shook above their Gorgon wings—
Fantastic longings for unreal things,
And fugitive delights, and lasting woes;
The summer's biting frost, and winter's rose;
And penitence and grief, that dragg'd along
The royal lawless pair, that poets sung.
One, by his Spartan plunder, seal'd the doom
Of hapless Troy—the other rescued Rome.
Beneath, as if in mockery of their woe,
The tumbling flood, with murmurs deep and low,
Return'd their wailings; while the birds above
With sweet aërial descant fill'd the grove.
And all beside the river's winding bed
Fresh flowers in gay confusion deck'd the mead,
Painting the sod with every scent and hue
That Flora's breath affords, or drinks the morning dew.
And many a solemn bower, with welcome shade,
Over the dusky stream a shelter made.
And when the sun withdrew his slanting ray,
And winter cool'd the fervours of the day,
Then came the genial hours, the frequent feast
And circling times of joy and balmy rest.
New day and night were poised in even scale,
And spring awoke her equinoctial gale,
And Progne now and Philomel begun
With genial toils to greet the vernal sun.
Just then—O hapless mortals! that rely
On fickle fortune's ever-changing sky—

E'en in that season, when, with sacred fire,
Dan Cupid seem'd his subjects to inspire,
That warms the heart, and kindles in the look,
And all beneath the moon obey his yoke—
I saw the sad reverse that lovers own,
I heard the slaves beneath their bondage groan;
I saw them sink beneath the deadly weight
And the long tortures that forerun their fate.
Sad disappointments there in meagre forms
Were seen, and feverish dreams, and fancied harms;
And fantoms rising from the yawning tomb
Were seen to muster in the gathering gloom
Around the car; and some were seen to climb,
While cruel fate reversed their steps sublime.
And empty notions in the port were seen,
And baffled hopes were there with cloudy mien.
There was expensive gain, and gain that lost,
And amorous schemes by fortune's favour cross'd;
And wearisome repose, and cares that slept.
There was the semblance of disgrace, that kept
The youth from dire mischance on whom it fell,
And glory darken'd on the gloom of hell;
Perfidious loyalty, and honest fraud,
And wisdom slow, and headlong thirst of blood;
The dungeon, where the flowery paths decoy;
The painful, hard escape, with long annoy.
I saw the smooth descent the foot betray,
And the steep rocky path that leads again to day.
There in the gloomy gulf confusion storm'd,
And moody rage its wildest freaks perform'd;
And settled grief was there; and solid night,
But rarely broke with fitful gleams of light
From joy's fantastic hand. Not Vulcan's forge,
When his Cyclopean caves the fumes disgorge;
Nor the deep mine of Mongibel, that throws
The fiery tempest o'er eternal snows;
Nor Lipari, whose strong sulphureous blast
O'ercanopies with flames the watery waste;
Nor Stromboli, that sweeps the glowing sky
With red combustion, with its rage could vie.—
Little he loves himself that ventures there,
For there is ceaseless woe and fell despair:

Yet, in this dolorous dungeon long confined,
Till time had grizzled o'er my locks, I pined.
There, dreaming still of liberty to come,
I spent my summers in this noisome gloom;
Yet still a dubious joy my grief controll'd,
To spy such numbers in that darksome hold.
But soon to gall my seeming transport turn'd,
And my illustrious partner's fate I mourn'd;
And often seem'd, with sympathising woe,
To melt in solvent tears like vernal snow.
I turn'd away, but, with inverted glance,
Perused the fleeting shapes that fill'd my trance;
Like him that feels a moment's short delight
When a fine picture fleets before his sight. BOYD.

THE TRIUMPH OF CHASTITY.

Quando ad un giogo ed in un tempo quivi.

WHEN to one yoke at once I saw the height
Of gods and men subdued by Cupid's might,
I took example from their cruel fate,
And by their sufferings eased my own hard state;
Since Phœbus and Leander felt like pain,
The one a god, the other but a man;
One snare caught Juno and the Carthage dame
(Her husband's death prepared her funeral flame—
'Twas not a cause that Virgil maketh one);
I need not grieve, that unprepared, alone,
Unarm'd, and young, I did receive a wound,
Or that my enemy no hurt hath found
By Love; or that she clothed him in my sight,
And took his wings, and marr'd his winding flight;
No angry lions send more hideous noise
From their beat breasts, nor clashing thunder's voice
Rends heaven, frights earth, and roareth through the air
With greater force than Love had raised, to dare
Encounter her of whom I write; and she
As quick and ready to assail as he:
Enceladus when Etna most he shakes,
Nor angry Scylla, nor Charybdis makes
So great and frightful noise, as did the shock
Of this (first doubtful) battle: none could mock

Such earnest war; all drew them to the height
To see what 'mazed their hearts and dimm'd their sight.
Victorious Love a threatening dart did show
His right hand held; the other bore a bow,
The string of which he drew just by his ear;
No leopard could chase a frighted deer
(Free, or broke loose) with quicker speed than he
Made haste to wound; fire sparkled from his eye.
I burn'd, and had a combat in my breast,
Glad t' have her company, yet 'twas not best
(Methought) to see her lost, but 'tis in vain
T' abandon goodness, and of fate complain;
Virtue her servants never will forsake,
As now 'twas seen, she could resistance make:
No fencer ever better warded blow,
Nor pilot did to shore more wisely row
To shun a shelf, than with undaunted power
She waved the stroke of this sharp conqueror.
Mine eyes and heart were watchful to attend,
In hope the victory would that way bend
It ever did; and that I might no more
Be barr'd from her; as one whose thoughts before
His tongue hath utter'd them you well may see
Writ in his looks; "Oh! if you victor be
Great sir," said I, "let her and me be bound
Both with one yoke; I may be worthy found,
And will not set her free, doubt not my faith:"
When I beheld her with disdain and wrath
So fill'd, that to relate it would demand
A better muse than mine: her virtuous hand
Had quickly quench'd those gilded fiery darts,
Which, dipp'd in beauty's pleasure, poison hearts.
Neither Camilla, nor the warlike host
That cut their breasts, could so much valour boast;
Nor Cæsar in Pharsalia fought so well,
As she 'gainst him who pierceth coats of mail;
All her brave virtues arm'd, attended there,
(A glorious troop!) and marchèd pair by pair:
Honour and blushes first in rank; the two
Religious virtues make the second row;
(By those the other women doth excel);
Prudence and Modesty, the twins that dwell

Together, both were lodgèd in her breast:
Glory and Perseverance, ever blest:
Fair Entertainment, Providence without,
Sweet Courtesy, and Pureness round about;
Respect of credit, fear of infamy;
Grave thoughts in youth; and, what not oft agree,
True Chastity and rarest Beauty; these
All came 'gainst Love, and this the heavens did please,
And every generous soul in that full height.
He had no power left to bear the weight;
A thousand famous prizes hardly gain'd
She took; and thousand glorious palms obtain'd,
Shook from his hands; the fall was not more strange
Of Hannibal, when Fortune pleased to change
Her mind, and on the Roman youth bestow
The favours he enjoy'd; nor was he so
Amazed who frighted the Israelitish host—
Struck by the Hebrew boy, that quit his boast;
Nor Cyrus more astonish'd at the fall
The Jewish widow gave his general:
As one that sickens suddenly, and fears
His life, or as a man ta'en unawares
In some base act, and doth the finder hate;
Just so was he, or in a worse estate:
Fear, grief, and shame, and anger, in his face
Were seen: no troubled seas more rage: the place
Where huge Typhœus groans, nor Etna, when
Her giant sighs, were moved as he was then.
I pass by many noble things I see
(To write them were too hard a task for me),
To her and those that did attend I go:
Her armour was a robe more white than snow;
And in her hand a shield like his she bare
Who slew Medusa; a fair pillar there
Of jasp was next, and with a chain (first wet
In Lethe flood) of jewels fitly set,
Diamonds, mix'd with topazes (of old
'Twas worn by ladies, now 'tis not) first hold
She caught, then bound him fast; then such revenge
She took as might suffice. My thoughts did change:
And I, who wish'd him victory before,
Was satisfied he now could hurt no more.

I cannot in my rhymes the names contain
Of blessèd maids that did make up her train;
Calliope nor Clio could suffice,
Nor all the other seven, for th' enterprise;
Yet some I will insert may justly claim
Precedency of others. Lucrece came
On her right hand; Penelope was by,
Those broke his bow, and made his arrows lie
Split on the ground, and pull'd his plumes away
From off his wings: after, Virginia,
Near her vex'd father, arm'd with wrath and hate,
Fury, and iron, and love, he freed the state
And her from slavery, with a manly blow;
Next were those barbarous women, who could show
They judged it better die than suffer wrong
To their rude chastity; the wise and strong—
The chaste Hebræan Judith follow'd these;
The Greek that saved her honour in the seas;
With these and other famous souls I see
Her triumph over him who used to be
Master of all the world: among the rest
The vestal nun I spied, who was so bless'd
As by a wonder to preserve her fame;
Next came Hersilia, the Roman dame
(Or Sabine rather), with her valorous train,
Who prove all slanders on that sex are vain.
Then, 'mongst the foreign ladies, she whose faith
T' her husband (not Æneas) caused her death;
The vulgar ignorant may hold their peace,
Her safety to her chastity gave place;
Dido, I mean, whom no vain passion led
(As fame belies her); last, the virtuous maid
Retired to Arno, who no rest could find,
Her friends' constraining power forced her mind.
The Triumph thither went where salt waves wet
The Baian shore eastward; her foot she set
There on firm land, and did Avernus leave
On the one hand, on th' other Sybil's cave;
So to Linternus march'd, the village where
The noble Africane lies buried; there
The great news of her triumph did appear
As glorious to the eye as to the ear

The fame had been; and the most chaste did show
Most beautiful; it grieved Love much to go
Another's prisoner, exposed to scorn,
Who to command whole empires seemèd born.
Thus to the chiefest city all were led,
Entering the temple which Sulpicia made
Sacred; it drives all madness from the mind;
And chastity's pure temple next we find,
Which in brave souls doth modest thoughts beget,
Not by plebeians enter'd, but the great
Patrician dames; there were the spoils display'd
Of the fair victress; there her palms she laid,
And did commit them to the Tuscan youth,
Whose marring scars bear witness of his truth:
With others more, whose names I fully knew,
(My guide instructed me,) that overthrew
The power of Love: 'mongst whom, of all the rest,
Hippolytus and Joseph were the best. ANNA HUME.

THE SAME.

WHEN gods and men I saw in Cupid's chain
Promiscuous led, a long uncounted train,
By sad example taught, I learn'd at last
Wisdom's best rule—to profit from the past.
Some solace in the numbers too I found,
Of those that mourn'd, like me, the common wound
That Phœbus felt, a mortal beauty's slave,
That urged Leander through the wintry wave;
That jealous Juno with Eliza shared,
Whose more than pious hands the flame prepared;
That mix'd her ashes with her murder'd spouse,
A dire completion of her nuptial vows.
(For not the Trojan's love, as poets sing,
In her wan bosom fix'd the secret string.)
And why should I of common ills complain,
Shot by a random shaft, a thoughtless swain?
Unarm'd and unprepared to meet the foe,
My naked bosom seem'd to court the blow.
One cause, at least, to soothe my grief ensued;
When I beheld the ruthless power subdued;
And all unable now to twang the string,
Or mount the breeze on many-colour'd wing.

But never tawny monarch of the wood
His raging rival meets, athirst for blood;
Nor thunder-clouds, when winds the signal blow,
With louder shock astound the world below;
When the red flash, insufferably bright,
Heaven, earth, and sea displays in dismal light;
Could match the furious speed and fell intent
With which the wingèd son of Venus bent
His fatal yew against the dauntless fair
Who seem'd with heart of proof to meet the war;
Nor Etna sends abroad the blast of death
When, wrapp'd in flames, the giant moves beneath;
Nor Scylla, roaring, nor the loud reply
Of mad Charybdis, when her waters fly
And seem to lave the moon, could match the rage
Of those fierce rivals burning to engage.
Aloof the many drew with sudden fright,
And clamber'd up the hills to see the fight;
And when the tempest of the battle grew,
Each face display'd a wan and earthy hue.
The assailant now prepared his shaft to wing,
And fixed his fatal arrow on the string:
The fatal string already reach'd his ear;
Nor from the leopard flies the trembling deer
With half the haste that his ferocious wrath
Bore him impetuous on to deeds of death;
And in his stern regard the scorching fire
Was seen, that burns the breast with fierce desire;
To me a fatal flame! but hope to see
My lovely tyrant forced to love like me,
And, bound in equal chain, assuaged my woe;
As, with an eager eye, I watch'd the coming blow
But virtue, as it ne'er forsakes the soul
That yields obedience to her blest control,
Proves how of her unjustly we complain,
When she vouchsafes her gracious aid in vain
In vain the self-abandon'd shift the blame
Upon their stars, or fate's perverted name.
Ne'er did a gladiator shun the stroke
With nimbler turn, or more attentive look;
Never did pilot's hand the vessel steer
With more dexterity the shoals to clear

Than with evasion quick and matchless art,
By grace and virtue arm'd in head and heart,
She wafted quick the cruel shaft aside,
Woe to the lingering soul that dares the stroke abide!
I watch'd, and long with firm expectance stood
To see a mortal by a god subdued,
The usual fate of man! in hope to find
The cords of Love the beauteous captive bind
With me, a willing slave, to Cupid's car,
The fortunes of the common race to share.
As one, whose secrets in his looks we spy,
His inmost thoughts discovers in his eye
Or in his aspect, graved by nature's hand,
My gestures, ere I spoke, enforced my fond demand.
"Oh, link us to your wheels!" aloud I cried,
"If your victorious arms the fray decide:
Oh, bind us closely with your strongest chain!
I ne'er will seek for liberty again!"—
But oh! what fury seem'd his eyes to fill!
No bard that ever quaff'd Castalia's rill
Could match his frenzy, when his shafts of fire
With magic plumed, and barb'd with hot desire,
Short of their sacred aim, innoxious fell,
Extinguish'd by the pure ethereal spell.
Camilla; or the Amazons in arms
From ancient Thermodon, to fierce alarms
Inured; or Julius in Pharsalia's field,
When his dread onset forced the foe to yield—
Came not so boldly on as she, to face
The mighty victor of the human race,
Who scorns the temper'd mail and buckler's ward.
With her the Virtues came—an heavenly guard,
A sky-descended legion, clad in light
Of glorious panoply, contemning mortal might;
All weaponless they came; but hand in hand
Defied the fury of the adverse band:
Honour and maiden Shame were in the ban,
Elysian twins, beloved by God and man.
Her delegates in arms with them combined;
Prudence appear'd, the daughter of the mind;
Pure Temperance next, and Steadiness of soul,
That ever keeps in view the eternal goal;

And Gentleness and soft Address were seen,
And Courtesy, with mild inviting mien;
And Purity, and cautious Dread of blame,
With ardent love of clear unspotted fame;
And sage Discretion, seldom seen below,
Where the full veins with youthful ardour glow;
Benevolence and Harmony of soul
Were there, but rarely found from pole to pole;
And there consummate Beauty shone, combined
With all the pureness of an angel-mind.
Such was the host that to the conflict came,
Their bosoms kindling with empyreal flame
And sense of heavenly help.—The beams that broke
From each celestial file with horror struck
The bowyer god, who felt the blinding rays,
And like a mortal stood in fix'd amaze;
While on his spoils the fair assailants flew,
And plunder'd at their ease the captive crew;
And some with palmy boughs the way bestrew'd,
To show their conquest o'er the baffled god.
Sudden as Hannibal on Zama's field
Was forced to Scipio's conquering arms to yield;
Sudden as David's hand the giant sped,
When Accaron beheld his fall and fled;
Sudden as her revenge who gave the word,
When her stern guards dispatch'd the Persian lord;
Or like a man that feels a strong disease
His shivering members in a moment seize—
Such direful throes convulsed the despot's frame.
His hands, that veil'd his eyes, confess'd his shame,
And mental pangs, more agonising far,
In his sick bosom bred a civil war;
And hate and anguish, with insatiate ire,
Flash'd in his eyes with momentary fire.—
Not raging Ocean, when its billows boil;
Nor Typhon, when he lifts the trembling soil
Of Arima, his tortured limbs to ease;
Nor Etna, thundering o'er the subject seas—
Surpass'd the fury of the baffled Power,
Who stamp'd with rage, and bann'd the luckless hour.
Scenes yet unsung demand my loftiest lays—
But oh! the theme transcends a mortal's praise.

A sweet but humbler subject may suffice
To muster in my song her fair allies;
But first, her arms and vesture claim my song
Before I chant the fair attendant throng:—
A robe she wore that seem'd of woven light;
The buckler of Minerva fill'd her right,
Medusa's bane; a column there was drawn
Of jasper bright; and o'er the snowy lawn
And round her beauteous neck a chain was slung,
Which glittering on her snowy bosom hung.
Diamond and topaz there, with mingled ray,
Return'd in varied hues the beam of day;
A treasure of inestimable cost,
Too long, alas! in Lethe's bosom lost:
To modern matrons scarcely known by fame,
Few, were it to be found, the prize would claim.
With this the vanquish'd god she firmly bound,
While I with joy her kind assistance own'd:
But oh! the feeble Muse attempts in vain
To celebrate in song her numerous train;
Not all the choir of Aganippe's spring
The pageant of the sisterhood could sing:
But some shall live, distinguish'd in my lay,
The most illustrious of the long array.—
The dexter wing the fair Lucretia led,
With her, who, faithful to her nuptial bed,
Her suitors scorn'd: and these with dauntless hand
The quiver seized, and scatter'd on the strand
The pointless arrows, and the broken bow
Of Cupid, their despoil'd and recreant foe.—
Lovely Virginia with her sire was nigh:
Paternal love and anger in his eye
Beam'd terrible, while in his hand he show'd
Aloft the dagger, tinged with virgin blood,
Which freedom on the maid and Rome at once bestow'd.—
Then the Teutonic dames, a dauntless race,
Who rush'd on death to shun a foe's embrace;—
And Judith chaste and fair, but void of dread,
Who the hot blood of Holofernes shed;—
And that fair Greek who chose a watery grave
Her threaten'd purity unstain'd to save.—

All these and others to the combat flew,
And all combined to wreak the vengeance due
On him, whose haughty hand in days of yore
From clime to clime his conquering standard bore.
Another troop the vestal virgin led,
Who bore along from Tyber's oozy bed
His liquid treasure in a sieve, to show
The falsehood of her base calumnious foe
By wondrous proof.—And there the Sabine queen
With all the matrons of her race was seen,
Renown'd in records old;—and next in fame
Was she, who dauntless met the funeral flame,
Not wrong'd in Love, but to preserve her vows
Immaculate to her Sidonian spouse.
Let others of Æneas' falsehood tell,
How by an unrequited flame she fell;
A nobler, though a self-inflicted doom,
Caused by connubial Love, dismiss'd her to the tomb.—
Picarda next I saw, who vainly tried
To pass her days on Arno's flowery side
In single purity, till force compell'd
The virgin to the marriage bond to yield.
The triumph seem'd at last to reach the shore
Where lofty Baiæ hears the Tuscan roar.
'Twas on a vernal morn it touch'd the land,
And 'twixt Mount Barbaro that crowns the strand
And old Avernus (once an hallow'd ground);
For the Cumæan sibyl's cell renown'd.
Linterno's sandy bounds it reach'd at last,
Great Scipio's favour'd haunt in ages past;
Famed Africanus, whose victorious blade
The slaughterous deeds of Hannibal repaid,
And to his country's heart a bloody passage made.
Here in a calm retreat his life he spent,
With rural peace and solitude content.
And here the flying rumour sped before,
And magnified the deed from shore to shore.
The pageant, when it reach'd the destined spot,
Seem'd to exceed their utmost reach of thought.
There, all distinguish'd by their deeds of arms,
Excell'd the rest in more than mortal charms.

Nor he, whom oft the steeds of conquest drew,
Disdained another's triumphs to pursue.
At the metropolis arrived at last,
To fair Sulpicia's temples soon we pass'd,
Sacred to Chastity, to ward the pest
With which her sensual foes inflame the breast;
The patroness of noble dames alone—
Then was the fair plebeian Pole unknown.
The victress here display'd her martial spoils,
And here the laurel hung that crown'd her toils:
A guard she stationed on the temple's bound—
The Tuscan, mark'd with many a glorious wound
Suspicion in the jealous breast to cure:
With him a chosen squadron kept the door.
I heard their names, and I remember well
The youthful Greek that by his stepdame fell,
And him who, kept by Heaven's command in awe,
Refused to violate the nuptial law. BOYD.

THE TRIUMPH OF DEATH.

PART I.

Questa leggiadra e gloriosa Donna.

THE glorious Maid, whose soul to heaven is gone
And left the rest cold earth, she who was grown
A pillar of true valour, and had gain'd
Much honour by her victory, and chain'd
That god which doth the world with terror bind,
Using no armour but her own chaste mind;
A fair aspect, coy thoughts, and words well weigh'd,
Sweet modesty to these gave friendly aid.
It was a miracle on earth to see
The bow and arrows of the deity,
And all his armour broke, who erst had slain
Such numbers, and so many captive ta'en;
The fair dame from the noble sight withdrew
With her choice company,—they were but few,
And made a little troop, true virtue's rare,—
Yet each of them did by herself appear
A theme for poems, and might well incite
The best historian: they bore a white

Unspotted ermine, in a field of green,
About whose neck a topaz chain was seen
Set in pure gold; their heavenly words and gait,
Express'd them blest were born for such a fate.
Bright stars they seem'd, she did a sun appear,
Who darken'd not the rest, but made more clear
Their splendour; honour in brave minds is found:
This troop, with violets and roses crown'd,
Cheerfully march'd, when lo, I might espy
Another ensign dreadful to mine eye—
A lady clothed in black, whose stern looks were
With horror fill'd, and did like hell appear,
Advanced, and said, "You who are proud to be
So fair and young, yet have no eyes to see
How near you are your end; behold, I am
She, whom they, fierce, and blind, and cruel name,
Who meet untimely deaths; 'twas I did make
Greece subject, and the Roman Empire shake;
My piercing sword sack'd Troy, how many rude
And barbarous people are by me subdued?
Many ambitious, vain, and amorous thought
My unwish'd presence hath to nothing brought;
Now am I come to you, while yet your state
Is happy, ere you feel a harder fate."
"On these you have no power," she then replied,
(Who had more worth than all the world beside,)
"And little over me; but there is one
Who will be deeply grieved when I am gone,
His happiness doth on my life depend,
I shall find freedom in a peaceful end."
As one who glancing with a sudden eye
Some unexpected object doth espy;
Then looks again, and doth his own haste blame:
So in a doubting pause, this cruel dame
A little stay'd, and said, "The rest I call
To mind, and know I have o'ercome them all:"
Then with less fierce aspect, she said, "Thou guide
Of this fair crew, hast not my strength assay'd,
Let her advise, who may command, prevent
Decrepit age, 'tis but a punishment;
From me this honour thou alone shalt have,
Without or fear or pain, to find thy grave."

"As He shall please, who dwelleth in the heaven
And rules on earth, such portion must be given
To me, as others from thy hand receive,"
She answered then; afar we might perceive
Millions of dead heap'd on th' adjacent plain;
No verse nor prose may comprehend the slain
Did on Death's triumph wait, from India,
From Spain, and from Morocco, from Cathay,
And all the skirts of th' earth they gather'd were;
Who had most happy lived, attended there:
Popes, Emperors, nor Kings, no ensigns wore
Of their past height, but naked show'd and poor.
Where be their riches, where their precious gems,
Their mitres, sceptres, robes, and diadems?
O miserable men, whose hopes arise
From worldly joys, yet be there few so wise
As in those trifling follies not to trust;
And if they be deceived, in end 'tis just:
Ah! more than blind, what gain you by your toil?
You must return once to your mother's soil,
And after-times your names shall hardly know,
Nor any profit from your labour grow;
All those strange countries by your warlike stroke
Submitted to a tributary yoke;
The fuel erst of your ambitious fire,
What help they now? The vast and bad desire
Of wealth and power at a bloody rate
Is wicked,—better bread and water eat
With peace; a wooden dish doth seldom hold
A poison'd draught; glass is more safe than gold;
But for this theme a larger time will ask,
I must betake me to my former task.
The fatal hour of her short life drew near,
That doubtful passage which the world doth fear;
Another company, who had not been
Freed from their earthy burden there were seen,
To try if prayers could appease the wrath,
Or stay th' inexorable hand, of Death.
That beauteous crowd convened to see the end
Which all must taste; each neighbour, every friend
Stood by, when grim Death with her hand took hold,
And pull'd away one only hair of gold,

Thus from the world this fairest flower is ta'en
To make her shine more bright, not out of spleen:
How many moaning plaints, what store of cries
Were utter'd there, when Fate shut those fair eyes
For which so oft I sung; whose beauty burn'd
My tortured heart so long; while others mourn'd,
She pleased, and quiet did the fruit enjoy
Of her blest life: "Farewell," without annoy,
"True saint on earth," said they; so might she be
Esteem'd, but nothing bates Death's cruelty.
What shall become of others, since so pure
A body did such heats and colds endure,
And changed so often in so little space?
Ah, worldly hopes, how blind you be, how base!
If since I bathe the ground with flowing tears
For that mild soul, who sees it, witness bears;
And thou who read'st mayst judge she fetter'd me
The sixth of April, and did set me free
On the same day and month. Oh! how the way
Of fortune is unsure; none hates the day
Of slavery, or of death, so much as I
Abhor the time which wrought my liberty,
And my too lasting life; it had been just
My greater age had first been turn'd to dust,
And paid to time, and to the world, the debt
I owed, then earth had kept her glorious state:
Now at what rate I should the sorrow prize
I know not, nor have heart that can suffice
The sad affliction to relate in verse
Of these fair dames, that wept about her hearse;
"Courtesy, Virtue, Beauty, all are lost;
What shall become of us? None else can boast
Such high perfection; no more we shall
Hear her wise words, nor the angelical
Sweet music of her voice." While thus they cried,
The parting spirit doth itself divide
With every virtue from the noble breast,
As some grave hermit seeks a lonely rest:
The heavens were clear, and all the ambient air
Without a threatening cloud; no adversaire
Durst once appear, or her calm mind affright;
Death singly did herself conclude the fight;

After, when fear, and the extremest plaint
Were ceased, th' attentive eyes of all were bent
On that fair face, and by despair became
Secure; she who was spent, not like a flame
By force extinguish'd, but as lights decay,
And undiscernèd waste themselves away:
Thus went the soul in peace; so lamps are spent,
As the oil fails which gave them nourishment;
In sum, her countenance you still might know
The same it was, not pale, but white as snow,
Which on the tops of hills in gentle flakes
Falls in a calm, or as a man that takes
Desirèd rest, as if her lovely sight
Were closed with sweetest sleep, after the sprite
Was gone. If this be that fools call to die,
Death seem'd in her exceeding fair to be. ANNA HUME.

[LINES 103 TO END.]

AND now closed in the last hour's narrow span
Of that so glorious and so brief career,
Ere the dark pass so terrible to man!
And a fair troop of ladies gather'd there,
Still of this earth, with grace and honour crown'd,
To mark if ever Death remorseful were.
This gentle company thus throng'd around,
In her contemplating the awful end
All once must make, by law of nature bound;
Each was a neighbour, each a sorrowing friend.
Then Death stretch'd forth his hand, in that dread hour,
From her bright head a golden hair to rend,
Thus culling of this earth the fairest flower;
Nor hate impell'd the deed, but pride, to dare
Assert o'er highest excellence his power.
What tearful lamentations fill the air
The while those beauteous eyes alone are dry,
Whose sway my burning thoughts and lays declare!
And while in grief dissolved all weep and sigh,
She, in meek silence, joyous sits secure,
Gathering already virtue's guerdon high.
"Depart in peace, O mortal goddess pure!"
They said; and such she was: although it nought

'Gainst mightier Death avail'd, so stern—so sure!
Alas for others! if a few nights wrought
In her each change of suffering dust below!
Oh! Hope, how false! how blind all human thought!
Whether in earth sank deep the dews of woe
For the bright spirit that had pass'd away,
Think, ye who listen! they who witness'd know.
'Twas the first hour, of April the sixth day,
That bound me, and, alas! now sets me free:
How Fortune doth her fickleness display!
None ever grieved for loss of liberty
Or doom of death as I for freedom grieve,
And life prolong'd, who only ask to die.
Due to the world it had been her to leave,
And me, of earlier birth, to have laid low,
Nor of its pride and boast the age bereave.
How great the grief it is not mine to show,
Scarce dare I think, still less by numbers try,
Or by vain speech to ease my weight of woe.
Virtue is dead, beauty and courtesy!
The sorrowing dames her honour'd couch around
"For what are we reserved?" in anguish cry;
"Where now in woman will all grace be found?
Who with her wise and gentle words be blest,
And drink of her sweet song th' angelic sound?"
The spirit parting from that beauteous breast,
In its meek virtues wrapt, and best prepared,
Had with serenity the heavens imprest:
No power of darkness, with ill influence, dared
Within a space so holy to intrude,
Till Death his terrible triumph had declared.
Then hush'd was all lament, all fear subdued;
Each on those beauteous features gazed intent,
And from despair was arm'd with fortitude.
As a pure flame that not by force is spent,
But faint and fainter softly dies away,
Pass'd gently forth in peace the soul content:
And as a light of clear and steady ray,
When fails the source from which its brightness flows,
She to the last held on her wonted way.
Pale, was she? no, but white as shrouding snows,
That, when the winds are lull'd, fall silently,

She seem'd as one o'erwearied to repose.
E'en as in balmy slumbers lapt to lie
(The spirit parted from the form below),
In her appear'd what th' unwise term to die;
And Death sate beauteous on her beauteous brow. DACRE.

PART II.

La notte che seguì l'orribil caso.

THE night—that follow'd the disastrous blow
Which my spent sun removed in heaven to glow,
And left me here a blind and desolate man—
Now far advanced, to spread o'er earth began
The sweet spring dew which harbingers the dawn,
When slumber's veil and visions are withdrawn;
When, crown'd with oriental gems, and bright
As newborn day, upon my trancèd sight
My Lady lighted from her starry sphere:
With kind speech and soft sigh, her hand so dear,
So long desired in vain, to mine she press'd,
While heavenly sweetness instant warm'd my breast:
"Remember her, who, from the world apart,
Kept all your course since known to that young heart."
Pensive she spoke, with mild and modest air
Seating me by her, on a soft bank, where,
In greenest shade, the beech and laurel met.
"Remember? ah! how should I e'er forget?
Yet tell me, idol mine," in tears I said,
"Live you?—or dreamt I—is, is Laura dead?"
"Live I? I only live, but you indeed
Are dead, and must be, till the last best hour
Shall free you from the flesh and vile world's power.
But, our brief leisure lest desire exceed,
Turn we, ere breaks the day already nigh,
To themes of greater interest, pure and high."
Then I: "When ended the brief dream and vain
That men call life, by you now safely pass'd,
Is death indeed such punishment and pain?"
Replied she: "While on earth your lot is cast,
Slave to the world's opinions blind and hard,
True happiness shall ne'er your search reward;
Death to the good a dreary prison opes,
But to the vile and base, who all their hopes

And cares below have fix'd, is full of fear;
And this my loss, now mourn'd with many a tear,
Would seem a gain, and, knew you my delight
Boundless and pure, your joyful praise excite."
Thus spoke she, and on heaven her grateful eye
Devoutly fix'd, but while her rose-lips lie
Chain'd in cold silence, I renew'd my theme:
"Lightning and storm, red battle, age, disease,
Racks, prisons, poison, famine,—make not these
Death, even to the bravest, bitter seem?"
She answer'd: "I deny not that the strife
Is great and sore which waits on parting life,
And then of death eternal the sharp dread!
But if the soul with hope from heaven be fed,
And haply in itself the heart have grief,
What then is death? Its brief sigh brings relief:
Already I approach'd my final goal,
My strength was failing, on the wing my soul,
When thus a low sad whisper by my side,
'O miserable! who, to vain life tied,
Counts every hour and deems each hour a day,
By land or ocean, to himself a prey,
Where'er he wanders, who one form pursues,
Indulges one desire, one dream renews,
Thought, speech, sense, feeling, there for ever bound!'
It ceased, and to the spot whence came the sound
I turn'd my languid eyes, and her beheld,
Your love who check'd, my pity who impell'd;
I recognised her by that voice and air,
So often which had chased my spirit's gloom,
Now calm and wise, as courteous then and fair.
But e'en to you when dearest, in the bloom
Of joyous youth and beauty's rosy prime,
Theme of much thought, and muse of many a rhyme,
Believe me, life to me was far less sweet
Than thus a merciful mild death to meet,
The blessèd hope, to mortals rarely given:
And such joy smooth'd my path from earth to heaven,
As from long exile to sweet home I turn'd,
While but for you alone my soul with pity yearn'd."
"But tell me, lady," said I, "by that true
And loyal faith, on earth well known to you,

Now better known before the Omniscient's face,
If in your breast the thought e'er found a place
Love prompted, my long martyrdom to cheer,
Though virtue follow'd still her fair emprize.
For ah! oft written in those sweetest eyes,
Dear anger, dear disdain, and pardon dear,
Long o'er my wishes doubts and shadows cast."
Scarce from my lips the venturous speech had pass'd,
When o'er her fair face its old sun-smile beam'd,
My sinking virtue which so oft redeem'd,
And with a tender sigh she answer'd: "Never
Can or did aught from you my firm heart sever:
But as, to our young fame, no other way,
Direct and plain, of mutual safety lay,
I temper'd with cold looks your raging flame:
So fondest mothers wayward children tame.
How often have I said, 'It me behoves
To act discreetly, for he burns, not loves!
Who hopes and fears, ill plays discretion's part!
He must not in my face detect my heart;'
'Twas this, which, as a rein the generous horse,
Slack'd your hot haste, and shaped your proper course.
Often, while Love my struggling heart consumed,
Has anger tinged my cheek, my eyes illumed,
For Love in me could reason ne'er subdue;
But ever if I saw you sorrow-spent,
Instant my fondest looks on you were bent,
Myself from shame, from death redeeming you;
Or, if the flame of passion blazed too high,
My greeting changed, with short speech and cold eye
My sorrow moved you or my terror shook.
That these the arts I used, the way I took,
Smiles varying scorn as sunshine follows rain,
You know, and well have sung in many a deathless strain.
Again and oft, as saw I sunk in grief
Those tearful eyes, I said, 'Without relief,
Surely and swift he marches to his grave,'
And, at the thought, the fitting help I gave.'
But if I saw you wild and passion-spurr'd,
Prompt with the curb, your boldness I deterr'd;
Thus cold and kind, pale, blushing, gloomy, gay,
Safe have I led you through the dangerous way,

And, as my labour, great my joy at last."
Trembling, I answer'd, and my tears flow'd fast,
"Lady, could I the blessèd thought believe,
My faithful love would full reward receive."
"O man of little faith!"—her fairest cheek,
E'en as she spoke, a warm blush 'gan to streak—
"Why should I say it, were it less than true?
If you on earth were pleasant in my view
I need not ask; enough it pleased to see
The best love of that true heart fix'd on me;
Well too your genius pleased me, and the fame
Which, far and wide, it shower'd upon my name;
Your Love had blame in its excess alone,
And wanted prudence; while you sought to tell,
By act and air, what long I knew and well,
To the whole world your secret heart was shown;
Thence was the coldness which your hopes distress'd,
For such our sympathy in all the rest,
As is alone where Love keeps honour's law.
Since in your bosom first its birth I saw,
One fire our heart has equally inflamed,
Except that I conceal'd it, you proclaim'd;
And louder as your cry for mercy swell'd,
Terror and shame my silence more compell'd,
That men my great desire should little think;
But ah! concealment makes not sorrow less,
Complaint embitters not the mind's distress,
Feeling with fiction cannot swell and shrink,
But surely then at least the veil was raised,
You only present when your verse I praised,
And whispering sang, 'Love dares not more to say.'
Yours was my heart, though turn'd my eyes away;
Grieve you, as cruel, that their grace was such,
As kept the little, gave the good and much;
Yet oft and openly as they withdrew,
Far oftener furtively they dwelt on you,
For pity thus, what prudence robb'd, return'd;
And ever so their tranquil lights had burn'd,
Save that I fear'd those dear and dangerous eyes
Might then the secret of my soul surprise.
But one thing more, that, ere our parley cease,
Memory may shrine my words, as treasures sweet,

And this our parting give your spirit peace.
In all things else my fortune was complete,
In this alone some cause had I to mourn
That first I saw the light in humble earth,
And still, in sooth, it grieves that I was born
Far from the flowery nest where you had birth;
Yet fair to me the land where your love bless'd;
Haply that heart, which I alone possess'd,
Elsewhere had others loved, myself unseen,
And I, now voiced by fame, had there inglorious been."
"Ah, no!" I cried, "howe'er the spheres might roll,
Wherever born, immutable and whole,
In life, in death, my great love had been yours."
"Enough," she smiled, "its fame for aye endures,
And all my own! but pleasure has such power,
Too little have we reck'd the growing hour;
Behold! Aurora, from her golden bed,
Brings back the day to mortals, and the sun
Already from the ocean lifts his head.
Alas! he warns me that, my mission done,
We here must part. If more remain to say,
Sweet friend! in speech be brief, as must my stay."
Then I: "This kindest converse makes to me
All sense of my long suffering light and sweet:
But lady! for that now my life must be
Hateful and heavy, tell me, I entreat,
When, late or early, we again shall meet?"
"If right I read the future, long must you
Without me walk the earth."
She spoke, and pass'd from view. MACGREGOR.

THE TRIUMPH OF FAME.

PART I.

Da poi che Morte trionfò nel volto.

WHEN cruel Death his paly ensign spread
Over that face, which oft in triumph led
My subject thoughts; and beauty's sovereign light,
Retiring, left the world immersed in night;
The Phantom, with a frown that chill'd the heart,
Seem'd with his gloomy pageant to depart,

Exulting in his formidable arms,
And proud of conquest o'er seraphic charms.
When, turning round, I saw the Power advance
That breaks the gloomy grave's eternal trance,
And bids the disembodied spirit claim
The glorious guerdon of immortal Fame.
Like Phosphor, in the sullen rear of night,
Before the golden wheels of orient light
He came. But who the 'tendant pomp can tell,
What mighty master of the corded shell
Can sing how heaven above accordant smiled,
And what bright pageantry the prospect fill'd.
I look'd, but all in vain: the potent ray
Flash'd on my sight intolerable day
At first; but to the splendour soon inured,
My eyes perused the pomp with sight assured.
True dignity in every face was seen,
As on they march'd with more than mortal mien;
And some I saw whom Love had link'd before,
Ennobled now by Virtue's lofty lore.
Cæsar and Scipio on the dexter hand
Of the bright goddess led the laurell'd band.
One, like a planet by the lord of day,
Seem'd o'er-illumined by her splendid ray,
By brightness hid; for he, to virtue true,
His mind from Love's soft bondage nobly drew.
The other, half a slave to female charms,
Parted his homage to the god of arms
And Love's seductive power: but, close and deep,
Like files that climb'd the Capitolian steep
In years of yore, along the sacred way
A martial squadron came in long array.
In ranges as they moved distinct and bright,
On every burganet that met the light,
Some name of long renown, distinctly read,
O'er each majestic brow a glory shed.
Still on the noble pair my eyes I bent,
And watch'd their progress up the steep ascent.
The second Scipio next in line was seen,
And he that seem'd the lure of Egypt's queen;
With many a mighty chief I there beheld,
Whose valorous hand the battle's storm repell'd.

Two fathers of the great Cornelian name,
With their three noble sons who shared their fame;
One singly march'd before, and, hand in hand,
His two heroic partners trod the strand.
The last was first in fame; but brighter beams
His follower flung around in solar streams.
Metaurus' champion, whom the moon beheld,
When his resistless spears the current swell'd
With Libya's hated gore, in arms renown'd
Was he, nor less with Wisdom's olive crown'd.
Quick was his thought and ready was his hand,
His power accomplish'd what his reason plann'd;
He seem'd, with eagle eye and eagle wing,
Sudden on his predestined game to spring.
But he that follow'd next with step sedate
Drew round his foe the viewless snare of fate;
While, with consummate art, he kept at bay
The raging foe, and conquer'd by delay.
Another Fabius join'd the stoic pair,
The Pauli and Marcelli famed in war;
With them the victor in the friendly strife,
Whose public virtue quench'd his love of life.
With either Brutus ancient Curius came;
Fabricius, too, I spied, a nobler name
(With his plain russet gown and simple board)
Than either Lydian with her golden hoard.
Then came the great dictator from the plough;
And old Serranus show'd his laurell'd brow,
Marching with equal step. Camillus near,
Who, fresh and vigorous in the bright career
Of honour, sped, and never slack'd his pace,
Till Death o'ertook him in the noble race,
And placed him in a sphere of fame so high,
That other patriots fill'd a lower sky.
Even those ungrateful hands that seal'd his doom
Recall'd the banish'd man to rescue Rome.
Torquatus nigh, a sterner spectre stood,
His fasces all besmear'd with filial blood:
He childless to the shades resolved to go,
Rather than Rome a moment should forego
That dreadful discipline, whose rigid lore
Had spread their triumphs round from shore to shore.

Then the two Decii came, by Heaven inspired,
Divinely bold, as when the foe retired
Before their Heaven-directed march, amazed,
When on the self-devoted men they gazed,
Till they provoked their fate. And Curtius nigh,
As when to heaven he cast his upward eye,
And all on fire with glory's opening charms,
Plunged to the Shades below with clanging arms,
Lævinus, Mummius, with Flaminius show'd,
Like meaner lights along the heavenly road;
And he who conquer'd Greece from sea to sea,
Then mildly bade th' afflicted race be free.
Next came the dauntless envoy, with his wand,
Whose more than magic circle on the sand
The frenzy of the Syrian king confined:
O'er-awed he stood, and at his fate repined.
Great Manlius, too, who drove the hostile throng
Prone from the steep on which his members hung,
(A sad reverse) the hungry vultures' food,
When Roman justice claim'd his forfeit blood.
Then Cocles came, who took his dreadful stand
Where the wide arch the foaming torrent spann'd,
Stemming the tide of war with matchless might,
And turn'd the heady current of the fight.
And he that, stung with fierce vindictive ire,
Consumed his erring hand with hostile fire.
Duillius next and Catulus were seen,
Whose daring navies plough'd the billowy green
That laves Pelorus and the Sardian shore,
And dyed the rolling waves with Punic gore.
Great Appius next advanced in sterner mood,
Who with patrician loftiness withstood
The clamours of the crowd. But, close behind,
Of gentler manners and more equal mind,
Came one, perhaps the first in martial might,
Yet his dim glory cast a waning light;
But neither Bacchus, nor Alcmena's son
Such trophies yet by east or west have won;
Nor he that in the arms of conquest died,
As he, when Rome's stern foes his valour tried.
Yet he survived his fame. But luckier far
Was one that follow'd next, whose golden star

To better fortune led, and mark'd his name
Among the first in deeds of martial fame:
But cruel was his rage, and dipp'd in gore
By civil slaughter was the wreath he wore.
A less-ensanguined laurel graced the head
Of him that next advanced with lofty tread,
In martial conduct and in active might
Of equal honour in the fields of fight.
Then great Volumnius, who expell'd the pest
Whose spreading ills the Romans long distress'd.
Rutilius Cassus, Philo next in sight
Appear'd, like twinkling stars that gild the night.
Three men I saw advancing up the vale,
Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail:
Dentatus, long in standing fight renown'd,
Sergius and Scæva oft with conquest crown'd;
The triple terror of the hostile train,
On whom the storm of battle broke in vain.
Another Sergius near with deep disgrace
Marr'd the long glories of his ancient race,
Marius, then, the Cimbrians who repell'd
From fearful Rome, and Lybia's tyrant quell'd.
And Fulvius, who Campania's traitors slew,
And paid ingratitude with vengeance due.
Another nobler Fulvius next appear'd;
And there the Father of the Gracchi rear'd
A solitary crest. The following form
Was he that often raised the factious storm—
Bold Catulus, and he whom fortune's ray
Illumined still with beams of cloudless day;
Yet fail'd to chase the darkness of the mind,
That brooded still on loftier hopes behind.
From him a nobler line in two degrees
Reduced Numidia to reluctant peace.
Crete, Spain, and Macedonia's conquer'd lord
Adorn'd their triumphs and their treasures stored.
Vespasian, with his son, I next survey'd,
An angel soul in angel form array'd;
Nor less his brother seem'd in outward grace,
But hell within belied a beauteous face.
Then Nerva, who retrieved the falling throne,
And Trajan, by his conquering eagles known.

Adrian, and Antonine the just and good,
He, with his son, the golden age renew'd;
And ere they ruled the world, themselves subdued.
Then, as I turn'd my roving eyes around,
Quirinus I beheld with laurel crown'd,
And five succeeding kings. The sixth was lost,
By vice degraded from his regal post;
A sentence just, whatever pride may claim,
For virtue only finds eternal Fame. BOYD.

PART II.

Pien d'infinita e nobil maraviglia.

FULL of ecstatic wonder at the sight,
I view'd Bellona's minions, famed in fight;
A brotherhood, to whom the circling sun
No rivals yet beheld, since time begun.—
But ah! the Muse despairs to mount their fame
Above the plaudits of historic Fame.
But now a foreign band the strain recalls—
Stern Hannibal, that shook the Roman walls;
Achilles, famed in Homer's lasting lay,
The Trojan pair that kept their foes at bay;
Susa's proud rulers, a distinguish'd pair,
And he that pour'd the living storm of war
On the fallen thrones of Asia, till the main,
With awful voice, repell'd the conquering train.
Another chief appear'd, alike in name,
But short was his career of martial fame;
For generous valour oft to fortune yields,
Too oft the arbitress of fighting fields.
The three illustrious Thebans join'd the train,
Whose noble names adorn a former strain;
Great Ajax with Tydides next appear'd,
And he that o'er the sea's broad bosom steer'd
In search of shores unknown with daring prow,
And ancient Nestor, with his looks of snow,
Who thrice beheld the race of man decline,
And hail'd as oft a new heroic line:
Then Agamemnon, with the Spartan's shade,
One by his spouse forsaken, one betray'd:
And now another Spartan met my view,
Who, cheerly, call'd his self-devoted crew

To banquet with the ghostly train below,
And with unfading laurels deck'd the brow;
Though from a bounded stage a softer strain
Was his, who next appear'd to cross the plain:
Famed Alcibiades, whose siren spell
Could raise the tide of passion, or repel
With more than magic sounds, when Athens stood
By his superior eloquence subdued.
The Marathonian chief, with conquest crown'd,
With Cimon came, for filial love renown'd;
Who chose the dungeon's gloom and galling chain
His captive father's liberty to gain;
Themistocles and Theseus met my eye;
And he that with the first of Rome could vie
In self-denial; yet their native soil,
Insensate to their long illustrious toil,
To each denied the honours of a tomb,
But deathless fame reversed the rigid doom,
And show'd their worth in more conspicuous light
Through the surrounding shades of envious night.
Great Phocion next, who mourn'd an equal fate,
Expell'd and exiled from his parent state;
A foul reward! by party rage decreed,
For acts that well might claim a nobler meed:
There Pyrrhus, with Numidia's king behind,
Ever in faithful league with Rome combined,
The bulwark of his state. Another nigh,
Of Syracuse, I saw, a firm ally
To Italy, like him. But deadly hate,
Repulsive frowns, and love of stern debate,
Hamilcar mark'd, who at a distance stood,
And eyed the friendly pair in hostile mood.
The royal Lydian, with distracted mien,
Just as he 'scaped the vengeful flame, was seen;
And Syphax, who deplored an equal doom,
Who paid with life his enmity of Rome;
And Brennus, famed for sacrilegious spoil,
That, overwhelm'd beneath the rocky pile,
Atoned the carnage of his cruel hand,
Join'd the long pageant of the martial band;
Who march'd in foreign or barbarian guise
From every realm and clime beneath the skies.

But different far in habit from the rest,
One tribe with reverent awe my heart impress'd:
There he that entertain'd the grand design
To build a temple to the Power Divine;
With him, to whom the oracles of Heaven
The task to raise the sacred pile had given:
The task he soon fulfill'd by Heaven assign'd,—
But let the nobler temple of the mind
To ruin fall, by Love's alluring sway
Seduced from duty's hallow'd path astray;
Then he that on the flaming hill survived
That sight no mortal else beheld, and lived—
The Eternal One, and heard, with awe profound,
That awful voice that shakes the globe around;
With him who check'd the sun in mid career,
And stopp'd the burning wheels that mark the sphere,
(As a well-managed steed his lord obeys,
And at the straiten'd rein his course delays,)
And still the flying war the tide of day
Pursued, and show'd their bands in wild dismay.—
Victorious faith! to thee belongs the prize;
In earth thy power is felt, and in the circling skies.—
The father next, who erst by Heaven's command
Forsook his home, and sought the promised land;
The hallow'd scene of wide-redeeming grace:
And to the care of Heaven consign'd his race.
Then Jacob, cheated in his amorous vows,
Who led in either hand a Syrian spouse;
And youthful Joseph, famed for self-command,
Was seen, conspicuous midst his kindred band.
Then stretching far my sight amid the train
That hid, in countless crowds, the shaded plain,
Good Hezekiah met my raptured sight,
And Manoah's son, a prey to female sleight;
And he, whose eye foresaw the coming flood,
With mighty Nimrod nigh, a man of blood;
Whose pride the heaven-defying tower design'd,
But sin the rising fabric undermined.
Great Maccabeus next my notice claim'd,
By Love to Zion's broken laws inflamed;
Who rush'd to arms to save a sinking state,
Scorning the menace of impending Fate

Now satiate with the view, my languid sight
Had fail'd, but soon perceived with new delight
A train, like Heaven's descending powers, appear,
Whose radiance seem'd my cherish'd sight to clear.
There march'd in rank the dames of ancient days,
Antiope, renown'd for martial praise;
Orithya near, in glittering armour shone,
And fair Hippolyta that wept her son;
The sisters whom Alcides met of yore
In arms on Thermodon's distinguish'd shore;
When he and Theseus foil'd the warlike pair,
By force compell'd the nuptial rite to share.
The widow'd queen, who seem'd with tranquil smile
To view her son upon the funeral pile;
But brooding vengeance rankled deep within,
So Cyrus fell within the fatal gin:
Misconduct, which from age to age convey'd,
O'er her long glories cast a funeral shade.
I saw the Amazon whom Ilion mourn'd,
And her for whom the flames of discord burn'd,
Betwixt the Trojan and Rutulian train
When her affianced lover press'd the plain;
And her, that with dishevell'd tresses flew,
Half-arm'd, half-clad, her rebels to subdue.
Her partner too in lawless love I spied,
A Roman harlot, an incestuous bride.
But Tadmor's queen, with nobler fires inflamed,
The pristine glory of the sex reclaim'd,
Who in the spring of life, in beauty's bloom,
Her heart devoted to her husband's tomb;
True to his dust, aspiring to the crown
Of virtue, in such years but seldom known:
With temper'd mail she hid her snowy breast,
And with Bellona's helm and nodding crest
Despising Cupid's lore, her charms conceal'd,
And led the foes of Latium to the field.
The shock at ancient Rome was felt afar,
And Tyber trembled at the distant war
Of foes she held in scorn: but soon she found
That Mars his native tribes with conquest crown'd,
And by her haughty foes in triumph led,
The last warm tears of indignation shed.

O fair Bethulian! can my vagrant song
O'erpass thy virtues in the nameless throng,
When he that sought to lure thee to thy shame
Paid with his sever'd head his frantic flame?
Can Ninus be forgot, whose ancient name
Begins the long roll of imperial fame?
And he whose pride, by Heaven's imperial doom,
Reduced among the grazing herd to roam?
Belus, who first beheld the nations sway
To idols, from the Heaven-directed way,
Though he was blameless? Where does he reside
Who first the dangerous art of magic tried?
O Crassus! much I mourn the baleful star
That o'er Euphrates led the storm of war.
Thy troops, by Parthian snares encircled round,
Mark'd with Hesperia's shame the bloody ground;
And Mithridates, Rome's incessant foe,
Who fled through burning plains and tracts of snow
Their fell pursuit. But now, the parting strain
Must pass, with slight survey, the coming train:
There British Arthur seeks his share of fame,
And three Cæsarian victors join their claim;
One from the race of Libya, one from Spain,
And last, not least, the pride of fair Lorraine,
With his twelve noble peers. Goffredo's powers
Direct their march to Salem's sacred towers;
And plant his throne beneath the Asian skies,
A sacred seat that now neglected lies.
Ye lords of Christendom! eternal shame
For ever will pursue each royal name,
And tell your wolfish rage for kindred blood,
While Paynim hounds profane the seat of God!
With him the Christian glory seem'd to fall,
The rest was hid behind oblivion's pall;
Save a few honour'd names, inferior far
In peace to guide, or point the storm of war.
Yet e'en among the stranger tribes were found
A few selected names, in song renown'd.
First, mighty Saladin, his country's boast,
The scourge and terror of the baptized host.
Noradin, and Lancaster fierce in arms,
Who vex'd the Gallic coast with long alarms.

I look'd around with painful search to spy
If any martial form should meet my eye
Familiar to my sight in worlds above,
The willing objects of respect or love;
And soon a well-known face my notice drew,
Sicilia's king, to whose sagacious view
The scenes of deep futurity display'd
Their birth, through coming Time's disclosing shade.
There my Colonna, too, with glad surprise,
'Mid the pale group, assail'd my startled eyes.
His noble soul was all alive to fame,
Yet holy friendship mix'd her softer claim,
Which in his bosom fix'd her lasting throne,
With Charity, that makes the wants of all her own. BOYD.

PART III.

Io non sapea da tal vista levarme.

STILL on the warrior band I fix'd my view,
But now a different troop my notice drew:
The sage Palladian tribe, a nobler train,
Whose toils deserve a more exalted strain.
Plato majestic in the front appear'd,
Where wisdom's sacred hand her ensign rear'd.
Celestial blazonry! by heaven bestow'd,
Which, waving high, before the vaward glow'd:
Then came the Stagyrite, whose mental ray
Pierced through all nature like the shafts of day;
And he that, by the unambitious name,
Lover of wisdom, chose to bound his fame.
Then Socrates and Xenophon were seen;
With them a bard of more than earthly mien,
Whom every muse of Jove's immortal choir
Bless'd with a portion of celestial fire:
From ancient Argos to the Phrygian bound
His never-dying strains were borne around
On inspiration's wing, and hill and dale
Echoed the notes of Ilion's mournful tale.
The woes of Thetis, and Ulysses' toils,
His mighty mind recover'd from the spoils
Of envious time, and placed in lasting light
The trophies ransom'd from oblivion's night.
The Mantuan bard, responsive to his song,
Co-rival of his glory, walk'd along. . . . . .

The next with new surprise my notice drew,
Where'er he pass'd spontaneous flowerets grew,
Fit emblems of his style; and close behind
The great Athenian at his lot repined;
Which doom'd him, like a secondary star,
To yield precedence in the wordy war;
Though like the bolts of Jove that shake the spheres,
He lighten'd in their eyes, and thunder'd in their ears.
The assembly felt the shock, the immortal sound,
His Attic rival's fainter accents drown'd.
But now so many candidates for fame
In countless crowds and gay confusion came,
That Memory seem'd her province to resign,
Perplex'd and lost amid the lengthen'd line.
Yet Solon there I spied, for laws renown'd,
Salubrious plants in clean and cultured ground;
But noxious, if malignant hands infuse
In their transmuted stems a baneful juice.
Amongst the Romans, Varro next I spied,
The light of linguists, and our country's pride;
Still nearer as he moved, the eye could trace
A new attraction and a nameless grace.
Livy I saw, with dark invidious frown
Listening with pain to Sallust's loud renown;
And Pliny there, profuse of life I found,
Whom love of knowledge to the burning bound
Led unawares; and there Plotinus' shade,
Who dark Platonic truths in fuller light display'd:
He, flying far to 'scape the coming pest,
Was, when he seem'd secure, by death oppress'd;
That, fix'd by fate, before he saw the sun,
The careful sophist strove in vain to shun.
Hortensius, Crassus, Galba, next appear'd,
Calvus and Antony, by Rome revered,
The first with Pollio join'd, whose tongue profane
Assail'd the fame of Cicero in vain.
Thucydides, who mark'd distinct and clear
The tardy round of many a bloody year,
And, with a master's graphic skill, pourtray'd
The fields, "whose summer dust with blood was laid;"
And near Herodotus his ninefold roll display'd,
Father of history; and Euclid's vest
The heaven-taught symbols of that art express'd

That measures matter, form, and empty space,
And calculates the planets' heavenly race;
And Porphyry, whose proud obdurate heart
Was proof to mighty Truth's celestial dart;
With sophistry assail'd the cause of God,
And stood in arms against the heavenly code.
Hippocrates, for healing arts renown'd,
And half obscured within the dark profound;
The pair, whom ignorance in ancient days
Adorn'd like deities, with borrow'd rays.
Galen was near, of Pergamus the boast,
Whose skill retrieved the art so nearly lost.
Then Anaxarchus came, who conquer'd pain;
And he, whom pleasures strove to lure in vain
From duty's path. And first in mournful mood
The mighty soul of Archimedes stood;
And sage Democritus I there beheld,
Whose daring hand the light of vision quell'd,
To shun the soul-seducing forms, that play
On the rapt fancy in the beam of day:
The gifts of fortune, too, he flung aside,
By wisdom's wealth, a nobler store, supplied.
There Hippias, too, I saw, who dared to claim
For general science an unequall'd name.
And him, whose doubtful mind and roving eye
No certainty in truth itself could spy;
With him who in a deep mysterious guise
Her heavenly charms conceal'd from vulgar eyes.
The frontless cynic next in rank I saw,
Sworn foe to decency and nature's modest law.
With him the sage, that mark'd, with dark disdain,
His wealth consumed by rapine's lawless train;
And glad that nothing now remain'd behind,
To foster envy in a rival's mind,
That treasure bought, which nothing can destroy,
"The soul's calm sunshine, and the heart-felt joy."
Then curious Dicæarchus met my view,
Who studied nature with sagacious view.
Quintilian next, and Seneca were seen,
And Chæronea's sage, of placid mien;
All various in their taste and studious toils,
But each adorn'd with Learning's splendid spoils.

There, too, I saw, in universal jar,
The tribes that spend their time in wordy war;
And o'er the vast interminable deep
Of knowledge, like conflicting tempests, sweep.
For truth they never toil, but feed their pride
With fuel by eternal strife supplied;
No dragon of the wild with equal rage,
Nor lions in nocturnal war, engage
With hate so deadly, as the learn'd and wise,
Who scan their own desert with partial eyes.
Carneades, renown'd for logic skill,
Who right or wrong, and true and false, at will
Could turn and change, employ'd his fruitless pain
To reconcile the fierce, contending train:
But, ever as he toil'd, the raging pest
Of pride, as knowledge grew, with equal speed increased.
Then Epicurus, of sinister fame,
Rebellious to the lord of nature, came;
Who studied to deprive the soaring soul
Of her bright world of hope beyond the pole;
A mole-ey'd race their hapless guide pursued,
And blindly still the vain assault renew'd.
Dark Metrodorus next sustain'd the cause,
With Aristippus, true to Pleasure's laws.
Chrysippus next his subtle web disposed:
Zeno alternate spread his hand, and closed;
To show how eloquence expands the soul,
And logic boasts a close and nervous whole.
And there Cleanthes drew the mighty line
That led his pupils on, with heart divine,
Through time's fallacious joys, by Virtue's road,
To the bright palace of the sovereign good.—
But here the weary Muse forsakes the throng,
Too numerous for the bounds of mortal song. BOYD.

THE TRIUMPH OF TIME.

Dell' aureo albergo con l' Aurora innanzi.

BEHIND Aurora's wheels the rising sun
His voyage from his golden shrine begun,
With such ethereal speed, as if the Hours
Had caught him slumb'ring in her rosy bowers.

With lordly eye, that reach'd the world's extreme,
Methought he look'd, when, gliding on his beam,
That wingèd power approach'd that wheels his car
In its wide annual range from star to star,
Measuring vicissitude; till, now more near,
Methought these thrilling accents met my ear:—
"New laws must be observed if mortals claim,
Spite of the lapse of time, eternal fame.
Those laws have lost their force that Heaven decreed,
And I my circle run with fruitless speed;
If fame's loud breath the slumb'ring dust inspire,
And bid to live with never-dying fire,
My power, that measures mortal things, is cross'd,
And my long glories in oblivion lost.
If mortals on yon planet's shadowy face,
Can match the tenor of my heavenly race,
I strive with fruitless speed from year to year
To keep precedence o'er a lower sphere.
In vain yon flaming coursers I prepare,
In vain the watery world and ambient air
Their vigour feeds, if thus, with angels' flight
A mortal can o'ertake the race of light!
Were you a lesser planet, doom'd to run
A shorter journey round a nobler sun;
Ranging among yon dusky orbs below,
A more degrading doom I could not know:
Now spread your swiftest wings, my steeds of flame,
We must not yield to man's ambitious aim.
With emulation's noblest fires I glow,
And soon that reptile race that boast below
Bright Fame's conducting lamp, that seems to vie
With my incessant journeys round the sky,
And gains, or seems to gain, increasing light,
Yet shall its glories sink in gradual night.
But I am still the same; my course began
Before that dusky orb, the seat of man,
Was built in ambient air: with constant sway
I lead the grateful change of night and day,
To one ethereal track for ever bound,
And ever treading one eternal round."—
And now, methought, with more than mortal ire,
He seem'd to lash along his steeds of fire;

And shot along the air with glancing ray,
Swift as a falcon darting on its prey;
No planet's swift career could match his speed,
That seem'd the power of fancy to exceed.
The courier of the sky I mark'd with dread,
As by degrees the baseless fabric fled
That human power had built, while high disdain
I felt within to see the toiling train
Striving to seize each transitory thing
That fleets away on dissolution's wing;
And soonest from the firmest grasp recede,
Like airy forms, with tantalizing speed.
O mortals! ere the vital powers decay,
Or palsied eld obscures the mental ray,
Raise your affections to the things above,
Which time or fickle chance can never move.
Had you but seen what I despair to sing,
How fast his courser plied the flaming wing
With unremitted speed, the soaring mind
Had left his low terrestrial cares behind.
But what an awful change of earth and sky
All in a moment pass'd before my eye!
Now rigid winter stretch'd her brumal reign
With frown Gorgonean over land and main;
And Flora now her gaudy mantle spread,
And many a blushing rose adorn'd her bed:
The momentary seasons seem'd to fleet
From bright solstitial dews to winter's driving sleet,
In circle multiform, and swift career:
A wondrous tale, untold to mortal ear
Before: yet reason's calm unbiass'd view
Must soon pronounce the seeming fable true,
When deep remorse for many a wasted spring
Still haunts the frighted soul on demon wing.
Fond hope allured me on with meteor flight,
And Love my fancy fed with vain delight,
Chasing through fairy fields her pageants gay.
But now, at last, a clear and steady ray,
From reason's mirror sent, my folly shows,
And on my sight the hideous image throws
Of what I am—a mind eclipsed and lost,
By vice degraded from its noble post.

But yet, e'en yet, the mind's elastic spring
Buoys up my powers on resolution's wing,
While on the flight of time, with rueful gaze
Intent, I try to thread the backward maze,
And husband what remains, a scanty space.
Few fleeting hours, alas! have pass'd away,
Since a weak infant in the lap I lay;
For what is human life but one uncertain day!
Now hid by flying vapours, dark and cold,
And brighten'd now with gleams of sunny gold,
That mock the gazer's eye with gaudy show,
And leave the victim to substantial woe:
Yet hope can live beneath the stormy sky,
And empty pleasures have their pinions ply;
And frantic pride exalts the lofty brow,
Nor marks the snares of death that lurk below.
Uncertain, whether now the shaft of fate
Sings on the wind, or heaven prolongs my date.
I see my hours run on with cruel speed,
And in my doom the fate of all I read;
A certain doom, which nature's self must feel
When the dread sentence checks the mundane wheel.
Go! court the smiles of Hope, ye thoughtless crew!
Her fairy scenes disclose an ample view
To brainless men. But Wisdom o'er the field
Casts her keen glance, and lifts her beamy shield
To meet the point of Fate, that flies afar,
And with stern vigilance expects the war.
Perhaps in vain my admonitions fall,
Yet still the Muse repeats the solemn call;
Nor can she see unmoved your senses drown'd
By Circe's deadly spells in sleep profound.
She cannot see the flying seasons roll
In dread succession to the final goal,
And sweep the tribes of men so fast away,
To Stygian darkness or eternal day,
With unconcern.—Oh! yet the doom repeal
Before your callous hearts forget to feel;
E'er Penitence foregoes her fruitless toil,
Or hell's black regent claims his human spoil.
Oh, haste! before the fatal arrows fly
That send you headlong to the nether sky.

When down the gulf the sons of folly go
In sad procession to the seat of woe!
Thus deeply musing on the rapid round
Of planetary speed, in thought profound
I stood, and long bewail'd my wasted hours,
My vain afflictions, and my squander'd powers:
When, in deliberate march, a train was seen
In silent order moving o'er the green;
A band that seem'd to hold in high disdain
The desolating power of Time's resistless reign:
Their names were hallow'd in the Muse's song,
Wafted by fame from age to age along,
High o'er oblivion's deep, devouring wave,
Where millions find an unrefunding grave.
With envious glance the changeful power beheld,
The glorious phalanx which his power repell'd,
And faster now the fiery chariot flew,
While Fame appear'd the rapid flight to rue,
And labour'd some to save. But, close behind,
I heard a voice, which, like the western wind,
That whispers softly through the summer shade,
These solemn accents to mine ear convey'd:—
"Man is a falling flower; and Fame in vain
Strives to protract his momentaneous reign
Beyond his bounds, to match the rolling tide,
On whose dread waves the long olympiads ride,
Till, fed by time, the deep procession grows,
And in long centuries continuous flows;
For what the power of ages can oppose?
Though Tempe's rolling flood, or Hebrus claim
Renown, they soon shall live an empty name.
Where are their heroes now, and those who led
The files of war by Xanthus' gory bed?
Or Tuscan Tyber's more illustrious band,
Whose conquering eagles flew o'er sea and land?
What is renown?—a gleam of transient light,
That soon an envious cloud involves in night,
While passing Time's malignant hands diffuse
On many a noble name pernicious dews.
Thus our terrestrial glories fade away,
Our triumphs pass the pageants of a day;
Our fields exchange their lords, our kingdoms fall,
And thrones are wrapt in Hades' funeral pall.

Yet virtue seldom gains what vice had lost,
And oft the hopes of good desert are cross'd.
Not wealth alone, but mental stores decay,
And, like the gifts of Mammon, pass away;
Nor wisdom, wealth, nor fortune can withstand
His desolating march by sea and land;
Nor prayers, nor regal power his wheels restrain,
Till he has ground us down to dust again.
Though various are the titles men can plead,
Some for a time enjoy the glorious meed
That merit claims; yet unrelenting fate
On all the doom pronounces soon or late;
And whatsoe'er the vulgar think or say,
Were not your lives thus shorten'd to a day,
Your eyes would see the consummating power
His countless millions at a meal devour."
And reason's voice my stubborn mind subdued;
Conviction soon the solemn words pursued;
I saw all mortal glory pass away,
Like vernal snows beneath the rising ray;
And wealth, and power, and honour, strive in vain
To 'scape the laws of Time's despotic reign.
Though still to vulgar eyes they seem to claim
A lot conspicuous in the lists of Fame,
Transient as human joys; to feeble age
They love to linger on this earthly stage,
And think it cruel to be call'd away
On the faint morn of life's disastrous day.
Yet ah! how many infants on the breast
By Heaven's indulgence sink to endless rest!
And oft decrepid age his lot bewails,
Whom every ill of lengthen'd life assails.
Hence sick despondence thinks the human lot
A gift of fleeting breath too dearly bought:
But should the voice of Fame's obstreperous blast
From ages on to future ages last,
E'en to the trump of doom,—how poor the prize
Whose worth depends upon the changing skies!
What time bestows and claims (the fleeting breath
Of Fame) is but, at best, a second death—
A death that none of mortal race can shun,
That wastes the brood of time, and triumphs o'er the sun.

BOYD.

THE TRIUMPH OF ETERNITY.

Da poi che sotto 'l ciel cosa non vidi.

When all beneath the ample cope of heaven
I saw, like clouds before the tempest driven,
In sad vicissitude's eternal round,
Awhile I stood in holy horror bound;
And thus at last with self-exploring mind,
Musing, I ask'd, "What basis I could find
To fix my trust?" An inward voice replied,
"Trust to the Almighty: He thy steps shall guide;
He never fails to hear the faithful prayer,
But worldly hope must end in dark despair."
Now, what I am, and what I was, I know;
I see the seasons in procession go
With still increasing speed; while things to come,
Unknown, unthought, amid the growing gloom
Of long futurity, perplex my soul,
While life is posting to its final goal.
Mine is the crime, who ought with clearer light
To watch the wingèd years' incessant flight;
And not to slumber on in dull delay
Till circling seasons bring the doomful day.
But grace is never slow in that, I trust,
To wake the mind, before I sink to dust,
With those strong energies that lift the soul
To scenes unhoped, unthought, above the pole.
While thus I ponder'd, soon my working thought
Once more that ever-changing picture brought
Of sublunary things before my view,
And thus I question'd with myself anew:—
"What is the end of this incessant flight
Of life and death, alternate day and night?
When will the motion on these orbs impress'd
Sink on the bosom of eternal rest?"
At once, as if obsequious to my will,
Another prospect shone, unmoved and still;
Eternal as the heavens that glow'd above,
A wide resplendent scene of light and love.
The wheels of Phœbus from the zodiac turn'd;
No more the nightly constellations burn'd;
Green earth and undulating ocean roll'd
Away, by some resistless power controll'd;

Immensity conceived, and brought to birth
A grander firmament, and more luxuriant earth.
What wonder seized my soul when first I view'd
How motionless the restless racer stood,
Whose flying feet, with wingèd speed before,
Still mark'd with sad mutation sea and shore.
No more he sway'd the future and the past,
But on the moveless present fix'd at last;
As at a goal reposing from his toils,
Like earth unclothed of all its vernal foils.
Unvaried scene! where neither change nor fate,
Nor care, nor sorrow, can our joys abate;
Nor finds the light of thought resistance here,
More than the sunbeams in a crystal sphere.
But no material things can match their flight,
In speed excelling far the race of light.
Oh! what a glorious lot shall then be mine
If Heaven to me these nameless joys assign!
For there the sovereign good for ever reigns,
Nor evil yet to come, nor present pains;
No baleful birth of time its inmates fear,
That comes, the burthen of the passing year;
No solar chariot circles through the signs,
And now too near, and now too distant, shines;
To wretched man and earth's devoted soil
Dispensing sad variety of toil.
Oh! happy are the blessed souls that sing
Loud hallelujahs in eternal ring!
Thrice happy he, who late, at last shall find
A lot in the celestial climes assign'd!
He, led by grace, the auspicious ford explores,
Where, cross the plains, the wintry torrent roars;
That troublous tide, where, with incessant strife,
Weak mortals struggle through, and call it life.
In love with Vanity, oh, doubly blind
Are they that final consolation find
In things that fleet on dissolution's wing,
Or dance away upon the transient ring
Of seasons, as they roll. No sound they hear
From that still voice that Wisdom's sons revere;
No vestment they procure to keep them warm
Against the menace of the wintry storm;

But all exposed, in naked nature lie,
A shivering crowd beneath the inclement sky,
Of reason void, by every foe subdued,
Self-ruin'd, self-deprived of sovereign good;
Reckless of Him, whose universal sway,
Matter, and all its various forms, obey;
Whether they mix in elemental strife,
Or meet in married calm, and foster life.
His nature baffles all created mind,
In earth or heaven, to fathom, or to find.
One glimpse of glory on the saints bestow'd,
With eager longings fills the courts of God
For deeper views, in that abyss of light,
While mortals slumber here, content with night:
Though nought, we find, below the moon, can fill
The boundless cravings of the human will.
And yet, what fierce desire the fancy wings
To gain a grasp of perishable things;
Although one fleeting hour may scatter far
The fruit of many a year's corroding care;
Those spacious regions where our fancies roam,
Pain'd by the past, expecting ills to come,
In some dread moment, by the fates assign'd,
Shall pass away, nor leave a rack behind;
And Time's revolving wheels shall lose at last
The speed that spins the future and the past;
And, sovereign of an undisputed throne,
Awful eternity shall reign alone.
Then every darksome veil shall fleet away
That hides the prospects of eternal day:
Those cloud-born objects of our hopes and fears,
Whose air-drawn forms deluded memory bears
As of substantial things, away so fast
Shall fleet, that mortals, at their speed aghast,
Watching the change of all beneath the moon,
Shall ask, what once they were, and will be soon?
The time will come when every change shall cease,
This quick revolving wheel shall rest in peace:
No summer then shall glow, nor winter freeze;
Nothing shall be to come, and nothing past,
But an eternal now shall ever last.
Though time shall be no more, yet space shall give
A nobler theatre to love and live.

The wingèd courier then no more shall claim
The power to sink or raise the notes of Fame,
Or give its glories to the noontide ray:
True merit then, in everlasting day,
Shall shine for ever, as at first it shone
At once to God and man and angels known.
Happy are they who in this changing sphere
Already have begun the bright career
That reaches to the goal which, all in vain,
The Muse would blazon in her feeble strain:
But blest above all other blest is he
Who from the trammels of mortality,
Ere half the vital thread ran out, was free,
Mature for Heaven; where now the matchless fair
Preserves those features, that seraphic air,
And all those mental charms that raised my mind,
To judge of heaven while yet on earth confined.
That soft attractive glance that won my heart
When first my bosom felt unusual smart,
Now beams, now glories, in the realms above,
Fed by the eternal source of light and love.
Then shall I see her as I first beheld,
But lovelier far, and by herself excell'd;
And I distinguish'd in the bands above
Shall hear this plaudit in the choirs of love:—
"Lo! this is he who sung in mournful strains
For many years a lover's doubts and pains;
Yet in this soul-expanding, sweet employ,
A sacred transport felt above all vulgar joy."
She too shall wonder at herself to hear
Her praises ring around the radiant sphere:
But of that hour it is not mine to know;
To her, perhaps, the period of my woe
Is manifest; for she my fate may find
In the pure mirror of the eternal mind.
To me it seems at hand a sure presage,
Denotes my rise from this terrestrial stage;
Then what I gain'd and lost below shall lie
Suspended in the balance of the sky,
And all our anxious sublunary cares
Shall seem one tissue of Arachne's snares;

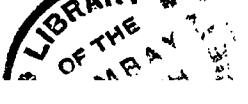
And all the lying vanities of life,
The sordid source of envy, hate, and strife,
Ignoble as they are, shall then appear
Before the searching beam of truth severe;
Then souls, from sense refined, shall see the fraud
That led them from the living way of God.
From the dark dungeon of the human breast
All direful secrets then shall rise confess'd,
In honour multiplied—a dreadful show
To hierarchies above, and saints below.
Eternal reason then shall give her doom;
And, sever'd wide, the tenants of the tomb
Shall seek their portions with instinctive haste,
Quick as the savage speeds along the waste.
Then shall the golden hoard its trust betray,
And they, that, mindless of that dreadful day,
Boasted their wealth, its vanity shall know
In the dread avenue of endless woe:
While they whom moderation's wholesome rule
Kept still unstain'd in Virtue's heavenly school,
Who the calm sunshine of the soul beneath
Enjoy'd, will share the triumph of the Faith.

These pageants five the world and I beheld,
The sixth and last, I hope, in heaven reveal'd
(If Heaven so will), when Time with speedy hand
The scene despoils, and Death's funereal wand
The triumph leads. But soon they both shall fall
Under that mighty hand that governs all,
While they who toil for true renown below,
Whom envious Time and Death, a mightier foe,
Relentless plunged in dark oblivion's womb,
When virtue seem'd to seek the silent tomb,
Spoil'd of her heavenly charms once more shall rise,
Regain their beauty, and assert the skies;
Leaving the dark sojourn of time beneath,
And the wide desolated realms of Death.
But she will early seek these glorious bounds,
Whose long-lamented fall the world resounds
In unison with me. And heaven will view
That awful day her heavenly charms renew,

When soul with body joins. Gebenna's strand
Saw me enroll'd in Love's devoted band,
And mark'd my toils through many hard campaigns
And wounds, whose scars my memory yet retains.
Blest is the pile that marks the hallow'd dust!—
There, at the resurrection of the just,
When the last trumpet with earth-shaking sound
Shall wake her sleepers from their couch profound;
Then, when that spotless and immortal mind
In a material mould once more enshrined,
With wonted charms shall wake seraphic love,
How will the beatific sight improve
Her heavenly beauties in the climes above! BOYD.

[LINES 82–99.]

HAPPY those souls who now are on their way,
Or shall hereafter, to attain that end,
Theme of my argument, come when it will;
And, 'midst the other fair, and fraught with grace,
Most happy she whom Death has snatch'd away,
On this side far the natural bound of life.
The angel manners then will clearly shine,
The meet and pure discourse, the chasten'd thought,
Which nature planted in her youthful breast.
Unnumber'd beauties, worn by time and death,
Shall then return to their best state of bloom;
And how thou hast bound me, love, will then be seen,
Whence I by every finger shall be shown!—
Behold who ever wept, and in his tears
Was happier far than others in their smiles!
And she, of whom I yet lamenting sing,
Shall wonder at her own transcendant charms,
Seeing herself far above all admired. CHARLEMONT.



SONNET FOUND IN LAURA'S TOMB.

Qui reposan quei caste e felice ossa.

HERE peaceful sleeps the chaste, the happy shade
Of that pure spirit, which adorn'd this earth:
Pure fame, true beauty, and transcendent worth,
Rude stone! beneath thy rugged breast are laid.
Death sudden snatch'd the dear lamented maid!
Who first to all my tender woes gave birth,
Woes! that estranged my sorrowing soul to mirth,
While full four lustres time completely made.
Sweet plant! that nursed on Avignon's sweet soil,
There bloom'd, there died; when soon the weeping Muse
Threw by the lute, forsook her wonted toil.
Bright spark of beauty, that still fires my breast!
What pitying mortal shall a prayer refuse,
That Heaven may number thee amid the blest?

ANON. 1777.

HERE rest the chaste, the dear, the blest remains
Of her most lovely; peerless while on earth:
What late was beauty, spotless honour, worth,
Stern marble, here thy chill embrace retains.
The freshness of the laurel Death disdains;
And hath its root thus wither'd.—Such the dearth
O'ertakes me. Here I bury ease and mirth,
And hope from twenty years of cares and pains.
This happy plant Avignon lonely fed
With Life, and saw it die.—And with it lies
My pen, my verse, my reason;—useless, dead.
O graceful form!—Fire, which consuming flies
Through all my frame!—For blessings on thy head
Oh, may continual prayers to heaven rise! CAPEL LOFFT.

HERE now repose those chaste, those blest remains
Of that most gentle spirit, sole in earth!
Harsh monumental stone, that here confinest
True honour, fame, and beauty, all o'erthrown!
Death has destroy'd that Laurel green, and torn
Its tender roots; and all the noble meed
Of my long warfare, passing (if aright
My melancholy reckoning holds) four lustres.

O happy plant! Avignon's favour'd soil
Has seen thee spring and die;—and here with thee
Thy poet's pen, and muse, and genius lies.
O lovely, beauteous limbs! O vivid fire,
That even in death hast power to melt the soul!
Heaven be thy portion, peace with God on high!

WOODHOUSELEE

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